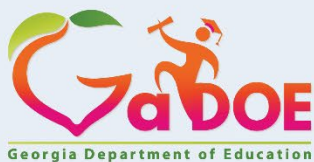


STATE OF GEORGIA GUIDE FOR SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS 2026 EDITION

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency
Georgia Department of Education



PURPOSE

The State of Georgia Guide for School Safety Plans was designed to be a resource for school administrators to understand legal requirements and best practices in the development of their School Safety Plan. The 2026 Edition is inclusive of all Georgia code signed into law as of 1 July 2025. The Georgia Safe Schools Act modernized emergency response training statewide and broadened awareness of school safety and security concepts.

The 2026 Edition of the Guide is structured into four sections:

- Section 1: Legal Requirements for Georgia School Safety Plans
- Section 2: School Safety Law Outside of School Safety Plans
- Section 3: School Safety Plan Best Practices
- Section 4: Resources

Under Georgia law, each public school is required to develop a school safety plan “to help curb the growing incidence of violence in schools, to respond effectively to such incidents, and to provide a safe learning environment for Georgia’s children, teachers, and other school personnel. Such a plan shall also address preparedness for natural disasters, hazardous materials, or radiological accidents, acts of violence, and acts of terrorism.”

All public schools are required to submit their school safety plans to their local emergency management agency, law enforcement, and Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) for approval. The plans should be created with input from community stakeholders including students, parents, faculty, and local law enforcement, as well as fire and emergency services. The plan must be reviewed annually. If substantially changed, they must be reapproved.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 School Safety Plans

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-27/section-20-2-1185/>

Georgia House Bill 268 was signed into law in April 2025 and mandates comprehensive safety, mental health, and security upgrades in schools. Key provisions include installing Alyssa’s Alert mobile panic systems, digital mapping, enhanced threat reporting, faster record transfers along with increased mental health resources.

Georgia House Bill 268

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/231344>

Georgia House Bill 147

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/213152>



School safety plans for private schools are encouraged to have input from students, parents or legal guardians, teachers, other school employees, local law enforcement, fire service, public safety, and emergency management agencies.

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and GEMA/HS are available to review school safety plans, provide site risk assessments, and offer other technical assistance related to school safety and security procedures. GEMA/HS will also provide these services to private schools upon request. In addition, the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) is available to review, train, and provide technical assistance on behavioral health.

For more information, please contact GEMA/HS at gema-schoolsafety@gema.ga.gov



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SECTION 1

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GEORGIA SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS

The purpose of this section is to detail areas required by Georgia law to be addressed in a school safety plan. The information contained in Section 1 is derived from the **Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A), predominantly code section 20-2-1185.**

Per Georgia law, every public school shall prepare a school safety plan to:

- Help curb the growing incidence of violence in schools.
- Respond effectively to such incidents.
- Provide a safe learning environment for Georgia's children, teachers, and school personnel.

The school safety plan **SHALL** address preparedness for natural disasters, hazardous materials or radiological accidents, acts of violence, and acts of terrorism.

School safety plans for public schools **SHALL** be prepared with input from students enrolled in that school, parents or legal guardians of such students, teachers in that school, community leaders, other school employees and school district employees, and local law enforcement, juvenile court, fire service, public safety, and emergency management agencies. As part of such plans, public schools shall provide coordination with local law enforcement agencies and the local juvenile court system.

School safety plans **SHALL** include, at a minimum, the following strategy areas:

- 1) Training school administrators, teachers, and support staff, including, but not limited to, school resource officers, security officers, secretaries, custodians, and bus drivers, on school violence prevention, school security, school threat assessment, mental health awareness, and emergency planning best practices.
- 2) Evaluating and refining school security measures.
- 3) Updating and exercising school emergency preparedness plans.
- 4) Strengthening partnerships with public safety officials.
- 5) Creating enhanced crisis communications plans and social media strategies.

School safety plans for public schools **SHALL** be submitted to the local emergency management agency, the local law enforcement agency, and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) for approval.

School safety plans prepared by public schools **SHALL** address security issues in school safety zones as defined in Code Section 16-11-127.1.



School safety plans **SHALL** address security issues involving the transportation of pupils to and from school and school functions when such transportation is furnished by the school or school system and school functions held during non-instructional hours.

Every public school **SHALL** conduct drills with students, school administrators, teachers, and other school personnel on the execution of school safety plans in such form and at such intervals based upon guidance from GEMA/HS.

No later than January 1, 2027, each public school safety plan required by Code 1197 Section 20-2-1185 **SHALL** include provisions that address the behavioral health needs of students and a behavioral threat assessment management plan for providing a structured, multidisciplinary process to identify, assess, and mitigate potential threats, while supporting the safety and well-being of students and school personnel.

Such behavioral threat assessment management plans **SHALL** be submitted to the DBHDD for approval.

DBHDD **SHALL** provide technical assistance to the GaDOE, regional educational service agencies, and all local school systems and other public schools in this state, including models of service to address the behavioral health needs of students.

GEMA/HS **SHALL** coordinate with DBHDD with respect to providing training and technical assistance to GaDOE, regional educational service agencies, and all local school systems and other public schools in this state on the development and implementation of such behavioral threat assessment management plans.

GEMA/HS **SHALL** coordinate with DBHDD, with respect to providing the same or similar training and technical assistance to private schools in this state.

Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-2-1185 (2024), School Safety Plans

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2010/title-20/chapter-2/article-27/20-2-1185>

HB 268 COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY & STUDENT WELL-BEING ACT

Georgia House Bill 268, the "Comprehensive School Safety & Student Well-Being Act" signed into law in 2025 mandates comprehensive safety, mental health, and security upgrades in K-12 schools. Key requirements include installing mobile panic-alarm systems, digital school mapping, establishing 24/7 anonymous tip lines, implementing behavioral threat assessment management team, and accelerating student record transfers. These legal amendments apply to each public school safety plan required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185.

Georgia's House Bill 268 addresses several issues involved in maintaining school safety, additional protocols and best practices can be found in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices.

Georgia House Bill 268 Comprehensive School Safety & Student Well-Being Act

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/238529/>

HB 147 SAFE SCHOOLS ACT

Georgia House Bill 147, the "Safe Schools Act" was enacted by the Georgia General Assembly effective July 1, 2023, strengthens school safety requirements for Georgia public schools. The Act requires all public schools to develop and maintain comprehensive school safety plans and submit those plans to GEMA/HS for review. These plans must address preparedness for natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, acts of violence or terrorism, violence prevention, threat assessment, and mental health awareness.

Additionally, HB 147 mandates that public schools conduct annual intruder alert drills and report their completion to GEMA/HS, while allowing parents or guardians the option to excuse their children from participation.

The Act also establishes a School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement for eligible certificated school personnel through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to enhance staff training and early identification of safety concerns. <https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/SSAG/SSAG%20Overview.pdf>

For more information on obtaining the endorsement, visit: <https://mypsc.gapsc.org/Home.aspx>

Georgia House Bill 147 Safe Schools Act

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/213152>



BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185.1) must be included in Georgia public school safety plans by January 1, 2027. Plans should provide information detailing measures to address students' behavioral health needs and a behavioral threat assessment management plan to identify and reduce potential threats, while supporting school safety. These plans must be submitted to DBHDD for approval. DBHDD will also provide technical assistance and service models to the GaDOE, regional educational service agencies, and all local school systems and other public schools in the state. In addition, GEMA/HS will work with the department to offer training and support to both public and private schools on developing and implementing these plans.



SECTION 2

SCHOOL SAFETY LAWS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS

Georgia’s additional school safety laws are designed to strengthen the protections, emergency readiness, and health supports available within K–12 schools, complementing the broader requirements of school safety plans mandated under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185. These laws aim to ensure schools are prepared for a wide range of threats to student well-being—extending beyond violence prevention to include medical emergencies, mental health crises, and rapid incident notification. Safety requirements have been expanded to address emerging risks by mandating tools such as mobile panic alert systems for faster emergency response, enhancing preparedness for acts of violence, and other crises.

At the same time, Georgia’s health-related mandates help schools respond effectively to life-threatening conditions by ensuring access to critical medical interventions such as Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and epinephrine auto-injectors, as well as plans for chronic conditions like diabetes and opioid overdose response. Together, these laws are intended to give schools comprehensive, actionable protocols that protect students and staff, support prevention and early intervention, and create safer, healthier learning environments statewide.

In this section, school administrators can navigate specific emergency preparedness protocols to assist in the continued development of their school’s safety plans.



WEAPONS IN SCHOOL SAFETY ZONES

The Weapons in School Safety Zones applies to school buildings, grounds, or at school functions (O.C.G.A. § 16-11-27.1). This Georgia law makes it generally unlawful to carry or possess weapons within school safety zones, at school functions, or on school-provided transportation, with specific exceptions and penalties. A school safety zone includes all property or buildings owned or leased by public or private K–12 schools, colleges, and universities. The statute defines “weapon” broadly, including firearms, knives, razors, clubs, stun guns, and similar dangerous instruments. Violations can result in misdemeanor or felony penalties depending on whether the individual is a lawful weapons carrier. Certain exemptions apply, such as authorized classroom use, athletic equipment, and organized training activities.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of a weapons protocol for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices.

O.C.G.A § 16-11-127.1. (2024). Carrying weapons within school safety zones, at school functions, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by a school.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-16/chapter-11/article-4/part-3/section-16-11-127-1/>

SHARING & REPORTING CYBER INCIDENTS

The Sharing and Reporting Cyber Incidents (O.C.G.A. § 38-3-22.2) Georgia law requires K–12 schools to report qualifying significant cyber events—including attacks, breaches, and malware activity—to GEMA/HS as soon as they are identified. Schools must immediately report incidents that could threaten safety, compromise important data, or affect critical technology or services. All reports must be submitted to GEMA/HS via a secure platform called the State Cybersecurity Portal.



Report a
Cybersecurity Event/
Incident →

The State of Georgia Cybersecurity Portal is available at the link below. This portal provides cybersecurity resources, guidance, reporting information, and support for state agencies, local governments, and partners.

<https://gagema.powerappsportals.us/>

The law requires schools to report incidents that could threaten safety, compromise important data, or affect critical technology or services. As soon as a cyber incident is recognized, staff should alert the district’s IT or security team immediately, so they can determine whether the situation meets the state’s reporting criteria. Reporting must happen right away—schools are not allowed to wait until an investigation is complete. The goal is to ensure the state is aware of threats in real time so they can help protect school systems across Georgia.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of protocols for sharing and reporting cyber incidents for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices in this guide.

O.C.G.A. § 38-3-22.2. Sharing and reporting cyberattacks and data breaches; reports or records confidential; construction with other provisions.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-38/chapter-3/article-2/section-38-3-22-2/>

OPIOIDS

Opioids are a class of drugs—natural, semi-synthetic, or synthetic—that work by binding to opioid receptors in the brain and nervous system to reduce the perception of pain. They include both prescription pain medications (such as morphine, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and codeine) and illegal substances like heroin. These drugs are commonly used to treat moderate to severe pain, but also carry significant risks, including dependence, addiction, overdose, and respiratory depression.

O.C.G.A. 31-11-55.1 details Georgia’s requirements for responding to an opioid-related overdose by authorizing first responders—including law enforcement, fire personnel, and rescue agencies—to administer opioid antagonists such as naloxone to save a person’s life. The law defines what qualifies as a first responder, what constitutes an opioid antagonist, and the conditions that indicate an opioid-related overdose. It also requires first responders who carry or use these medications to receive appropriate training.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of protocols for handling overdoses for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices in this guide.

O.C.G.A § 31-11-55.1. Opioid antagonists administered by first responders to save the life of a person experiencing an opioid-related overdose.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-31/chapter-11/article-3/section-31-11-55-1/>

DIABETES MEDICAL PLAN

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779 outlines Georgia’s requirements for ensuring that students with diabetes receive appropriate and safe care during the school day. The law establishes the use of a Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP) created by the student’s healthcare provider and signed by a parent or guardian to guide all diabetes related care at school. It requires training guidelines so that designated school employees can be properly prepared to assist students with diabetes. Training includes recognizing and responding to hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, administering insulin and glucagon, checking blood glucose and ketone levels, and understanding how meals, physical activity, and schedule changes affect glucose levels. The law ensures students receive necessary support while also allowing trained school personnel to provide diabetes care when needed.



School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of their diabetes medical plan protocols for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices in this guide.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779. Care for students with diabetes; training; diabetes medical management plan; liability; application to private schools.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-3/section-20-2-779/>

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Georgia law requires schools to implement comprehensive suicide awareness and prevention measures to protect student well-being. Under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.1, all certificated school personnel must receive annual training in suicide awareness and prevention, using materials approved by GaDOE in consultation with behavioral health experts. Training must include recognizing warning signs, identifying available mental-health services within the school and community, and understanding when and how to refer students and families for support. Each school district must also adopt a student suicide prevention policy that outlines procedures for prevention, intervention, and postvention, using a model policy developed by the GaDOE.

Suicide prevention refers to a coordinated set of strategies, programs, and actions designed to reduce the risk of suicide, support individuals who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviors and strengthen the protective factors that help keep people safe. It is based on the understanding that suicide is preventable and requires action at the individual, school, community, and societal levels.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of suicide prevention protocols for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices in this guide.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.1. Suicide prevention and awareness training; no duty of care imposed.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-3/section-20-2-779-1/>

For more information, please refer to the [After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools](#)

PANIC ALERT SYSTEMS

Ricky and Alyssa’s Law (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-591) strengthens emergency response capabilities in all Georgia public schools by requiring advanced alert technology and enhanced coordination with first responders. Every public school must install an Alyssa’s Alert–compatible mobile panic alarm system by July 1, 2026, enabling instant communication with 911, first responders, and integrated emergency platforms. The panic alert system is also required to integrate with school mapping data, providing responders with accurate building layouts and access points to improve emergency response times.

All public schools must also procure school mapping data in collaboration with their primary local law enforcement agency to ensure compliance. The mapping data must:

- Conform to software platforms used by local, state, and federal public safety agencies.
- Be printable & shareable electronically, including through interactive mobile platforms.
- Be verified annually for accuracy through an in-person inspection by the mapping entity.
- Identify and label access points within each building.
- Identify and label critical utilities, key boxes, AEDs, trauma kits, and emergency response aids and identify/label external areas near the school.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of panic alert system protocols for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices of this guide.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-590. (2026). Mobile panic alert system requirements for public schools (“Alyssa’s Alert”). Retrieved from <https://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20252026/236446.pdf>

ADDY’S LAW

Ady’s Law (O.C.G.A. § 40-6-163) strengthens safety measures for school bus operations. The purpose of Ady’s Law is to protect children from traveling to and from school. When a school bus stops, extends its stop arm, and flashes red lights, all traffic (unless a median separates lanes) must stop. Key provisions include strengthening penalties for illegally meeting or overtaking a stopped school bus, making the violation a high and aggravated misdemeanor with fines starting at \$1,000.00.

The law aims to prevent such accidents and purpose of Ady’s Law is to protect children from traveling to and from school by deterring illegal passing of school buses. When a school bus stops, extends its stop arm, and flashes red lights, all traffic (unless a median separates lanes) must stop.

School administrators can find additional recommendations regarding the preparation of transportation safety protocols for their school safety plan in Section 3 School Safety Plan Best Practices.

Georgia House Bill 1284

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/224174>



SAFETY DRILLS

Schools are required to conduct a variety of safety drills throughout the academic year to help ensure a consistently safe and healthy learning environment for students, educators, administrators, and the broader community. Georgia law mandates that school safety plans address preparedness for emergencies such as natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, acts of violence, and terrorism. Additionally, these plans are to be coordinated with local emergency management and public safety agencies.



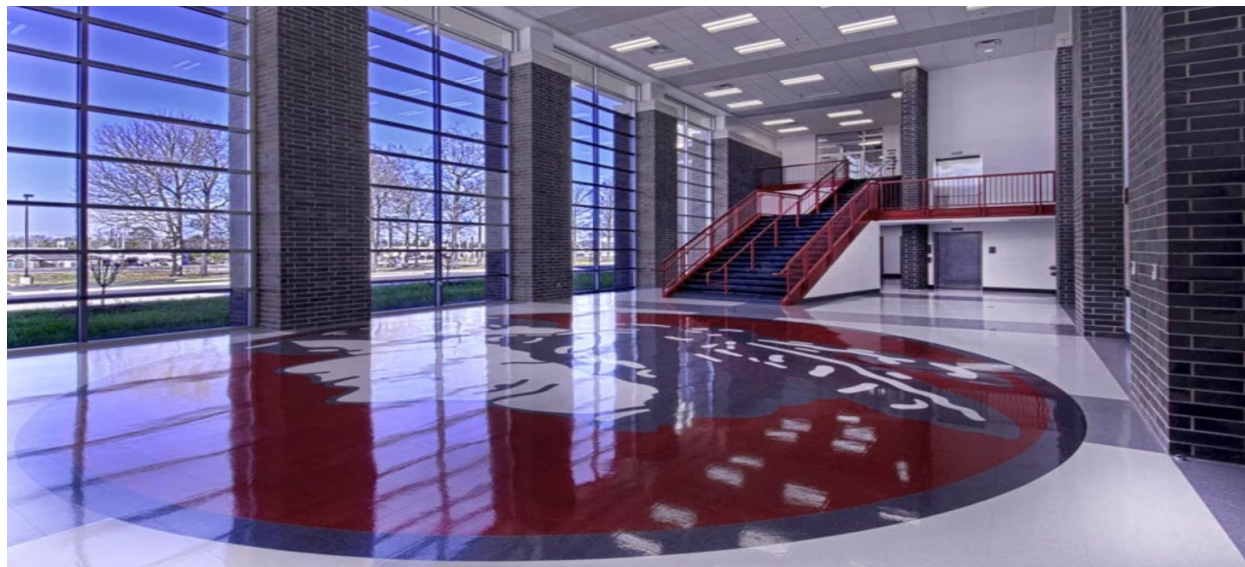
INTRUDER ALERT DRILLS

By October 1 of each school year, every public school shall conduct an intruder alert drill for students, school administrators, teachers, and other school personnel based upon guidance from GEMA/HS. Each local school system or public-school governing body shall promptly report to GEMA/HS the completion of such drills. All students shall participate in intruder alert drills, however, the governing body of a local school system or public school may provide an option for a child's parent or legal guardian to elect, in writing, that such child does not participate in intruder alert drills. As used in this paragraph, the term "intruder alert drill" means a set of procedures designed to familiarize the occupants of a building with ways to protect themselves against potential threats posed by an intruder who possesses or is suspected of possessing a weapon, as defined in **Code Section 20-2-742**.

Intruder Alert Drills are required by law to be reported directly to GEMA/HS. Schools are required to report intruder alert drills electronically, using a specific GEMA/HS link provided to them by their assigned Area Homeland Security Coordinator (HSC). It should be noted that this procedure is different from that by which schools report fire and/or severe weather drills. To be in compliance with Georgia law, schools must report intruder alert drills directly to GEMA/HS.

Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-2-742 (2024), Multi-tiered system of supports prior to suspension or expulsion for certain students.

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-2/subpart-1a/section-20-2-742/>



HB 340 DISTRACTION-FREE EDUCATION ACT

House Bill 340 is Georgia’s most recent cell phone ban, the Distraction-Free Education Act enacted in 2025 and signed by Governor Brian Kemp. This law establishes a statewide prohibition on student use of personal electronic communication devices in public elementary and middle schools. The ban includes personal electronic devices such as cellphones, smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, headphones, and similar wearable devices. Use of these personal electronic devices is “bell-to-bell” meaning students will not be allowed to use the devices from the start of the school day to dismissal, during classroom instruction, breaks, and assemblies or school activities effective July 1, 2026. Devices will be allowed when required by an individualized education program (IEP), a 504 plan, and/or a documented medical need. Local school systems are required to adopt and enforce policies for storing devices (e.g., lockers, pouches, classroom storage).

Distraction-Free Education Act O.C.G.A. § 20-2-* (Article: Distraction-Free Education Act), enacted by 2025 Ga. Laws Act No. ___ (HB 340)



SECTION 3

SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN BEST PRACTICES

This section outlines best practice guidance to help schools prepare for the wide range of emergency situations they may encounter. Schools must plan to build a proactive and comprehensive safety framework that protects students, staff, and visitors. By adopting standardized procedures and evidence-based strategies, schools can better identify potential threats before they escalate, foster a strong culture of preparedness through clear communication, training, and collaboration with law enforcement and community partners, and ensure that emergency responses are rapid and well-coordinated to minimize harm in the disaster.

This section also emphasizes the importance of supporting recovery and continuity by restoring normal operations and addressing emotional and psychological needs after a crisis while maintaining compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, aligning practices with national and state safety standards for a safe and healthy learning environment.



SCHOOL CRISIS PLAN ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DESIGNATED LOCATIONS

A crisis is defined as a sudden and unexpected event leading to a disruption of operations at a school or a school-sponsored event (i.e., field trips, sporting events, extracurricular activities), also considered an emergency. Crises may be natural (weather related) or manmade (e.g., cyber threats, hazardous materials exposure, active attacks). As with any emergency, crisis mitigation strategies are important components to the school safety plan.

This section identifies school personnel assigned to specific safety tasks and details the locations for gathering during a crisis. Schools should consider developing, maintaining, and exercising the plan to prepare school personnel to implement emergency preparedness throughout the school year. The plan provides details about the school personnel trained in emergency planning programs, including training in First Aid and CPR. The plan should also offer details about activities performed by teachers and students to rehearse how they will react to a crisis.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

The following information is recommended in your School Safety Plan:

1. Decision makers and backups who have responsibility for and authority to determine how to respond to a crisis.
2. School personnel who will conduct specific safety tasks and who have been thoroughly trained in those safety areas.
3. School personnel identified and trained to conduct response activities inside and outside of the building in addition to implementing other emergency response tasks.
4. Alternate school personnel identified and trained in their emergency response tasks.
5. Communication mechanisms to be used during a crisis.

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT (BTAM)

GEMA/HS recommends that schools maintain a dedicated, multidisciplinary behavioral threat assessment team that includes school administration, law enforcement, counselors, mental health partners, and other entities as necessary and available. Schools should maintain a systematic process to identify, inquire, assess, and manage people along with situations that raise concerns related to the health, safety, and wellbeing of the school, students, and school personnel. School officials should also have partners who can provide identified services to support these behavioral concerns.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that school safety plans includes the review of the following related to BTAM:

- Fact-based and Systematic: It relies on gathering and analyzing facts, evidence, and behaviors, not just intuition, to decide.
- Proactive Prevention: The goal is to intervene and mitigate threats before violence happens, which can help prevent mass casualty attacks and school shootings.
- Multi-Disciplinary Teams: It brings together professionals from various fields, such as law enforcement, behavioral health clinicians, and educators, to get a comprehensive view of the situation.
- Distinguishes between Threat & Intent: A critical function is to differentiate between someone who simply makes a threat and someone who poses a serious threat of violence.
- Case Management: Once a threat is assessed, a management or intervention plan is developed to reduce the risk posed by the individual.
- Wide Application: BTAM principles are applied in various settings, including schools, workplaces, and public communities.

PANIC ALERT SYSTEMS

A panic alert system in Georgia public schools is a state-mandated, mobile emergency alarm system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that schools consider the following regarding panic alert systems:

- A protocol for rapid emergency notification that requires mobile panic alert systems to enable staff to instantly notify law enforcement during crises, reducing response times and improving coordination.
- A plan to ensure real-time coordination with first responders—the mandated system must connect directly to multiple emergency services agencies, allowing responders to receive immediate, actionable alerts when a threat arises.
- A plan for improving situational awareness through digital mapping as schools must pair panic alert systems with digital campus mapping so that law enforcement receives precise building layouts and incident locations, enabling faster and safer navigation during emergencies.
- A procedure that supports consistent safety standards statewide for a uniform, modernized emergency-alert standard, closing gaps in safety preparedness.
- A plan that includes a comprehensive school safety strategy alongside broader measures such as enhanced mental health supports, anonymous reporting tools, and campus security improvements.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROTOCOL

Once an emergency evacuation protocol has been developed, it is important for school personnel and students to understand it and practice it throughout the year. Every evacuation is an opportunity to take lessons learned from the evacuation to update the school safety plan.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your emergency evacuation protocol:

- An assembly area and alternate assembly area should be designated and shared with school personnel. These locations should be at least 1,000 feet away from the school in the event it becomes necessary to evacuate the school campus (e.g., the baseball field).
- An evacuation plan, inclusive of evacuation routes to the assembly area is developed and distributed to school personnel along with designated alternative assembly area in the event the primary areas have been compromised.
- Physical or electronic blueprints of the facility and maps of school buildings and campus, that are current and shared with EMAs and law enforcement.
- Develop a security plan for all areas of the school to include parking lot areas, ballfields, and buildings located in and around the school.
- An evacuation transportation plan for persons with disabilities, mobility issues, or injuries, developed and distributed to school personnel.
- Physical or electronic copies of the current evacuation plan, along with a plan for persons with disabilities, developed and distributed to school personnel.
- Procedures to periodically assess the public address system as the primary means of notifying building occupants and other methods of communicating with school personnel.
- A plan to have maps posted within eye level of students indicating primary and secondary evacuation routes in all classrooms and shared areas.
- A plan for teachers to bring their “Go Kit” with them to the assembly areas (*refer to the “[Go Kit](#)” purpose and content starting on page 60 of this guide—Emergency Evacuation Kit Items*).
- A plan for teachers to verify that students are out of classrooms, restrooms, and workrooms.
- Procedures for teachers to guide students to the designated assembly area(s).
- Procedures for teachers to verify the presence of all students at the assembly area(s) and immediately report to students who are not present to school administrators.
- A procedure for teachers to remain with their students until administrators sound the all-clear signal.
- A procedure to address reverse evacuations should include steps to remove all students and personnel from assembly areas and return to the school, if applicable. In addition, the procedure should include identified evacuation routes that are visible to students’ eye level.



- A procedure to inform the local fire department, law enforcement agencies, and first responders of the number of students and school personnel in the school and provide a copy of the school floor plan, with additional copies available.
- A procedure for how and when to inform parents of the evacuation and safety reentry.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The need for an emergency plan for students and staff with disabilities, mobility issues, injuries, and individualized education plans (IEPs) is essential to securing a safe school environment for school personnel and students. Students with disabilities are entitled to the same emergency services as their peers and should be considered and included during emergency management planning.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended the following be included in your emergency plans for students with disabilities:

- Plan to work with a disability specialist who can provide guidance on how to meet students' physical and emotional needs.
- Identify the students' special needs in close consultation with parents/guardians to collect and organize specific data about students with disabilities, such as who has a disability, the nature of the disability, and the implications of that disability for safety planning.
- Maintain a confidential roster of students with special needs that identifies students who have disabilities and lists their teachers, classrooms, and daily schedules, as well as their potential needs during an emergency.
- Accommodations required during an emergency may include things such as:
 - Supervision during transitions with adult one-to-one assigned to student, if feasible.
 - Simple instructions in multiple modalities that are practiced in nonemergency situations.
 - A pre-identified quiet place for a student to self-regulate, if available.
 - Inclusion items in a "Go Bag" which are part of the IEP to include fidgets, hand sanitizer, emergency meds, noise canceling headphones, & other items.
 - Self-calming strategies taught in advance.
 - A peer buddy system.
- Schools should also provide response training to students with disabilities and for the adults responsible for their care. Both adults and students need to:
 - Learn to communicate with community partners.
 - Be able to communicate specifics about their special needs.
 - Use any necessary tools, such as evacuation equipment and visual aids.
 - Opportunities to practice the plan in a realistic environment.

- Collaboration and ongoing communication with community partners are essential and facilitate safe integration of students with disabilities into school activities and plans.
- Your local emergency medical services should also be made aware of any special considerations for your students with special needs.

EMERGENCY KITS & DEVICES

The kits should include water, breathing protection devices, emergency lights and tools, food, first aid supplies, and Naloxone (commonly known by the brand name Narcan).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended your school have the following emergency kits readily available:

- Emergency Evacuation Kit
- First Aid Kit
- Go Kit
- Stop the Bleed Kit (STB)
- Maps (*locations of all STB Kits, AED's, Naloxone, EpiPen's, and other emergency equipment*)

A description of these items can be found in **Section 4 Resources**.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROTOCOL

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your family assistance protocol:

- A plan for assembling school personnel and students in designated assembly areas.
- Traffic flow plan to and from the assembly area, precoordinated with law enforcement or emergency agencies, separating emergency responders, busses, and parent drivers.
- A procedure for notifying local law enforcement/emergency agencies of the incident and traffic routing procedures.
- A designated information focal point with access to the school's communication network, equipped with prescribed messages for common emergencies and instructions.
- If necessary, a news media area separated from the assembly area and family reunification area.
- A plan for addressing the news media with detailed instructions to be read to the public with directions to concerned relatives.
- Addressing having a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with facilities that can be used during an emergency that do not belong to the school district with plans for updates periodically every few months.



- Plans for the notification of school transportation to begin routing school buses to the assembly area(s).
- Instructions for directing parents/guardians to designated location.
- A means to verify parents/guardians' guardianship of the student, right to pick up the student, and sign for the release of the student.
- A procedure to instruct parents/guardians on leaving the site to make room for others once they have signed their students out.
- A manifest for each school bus to account for all students riding buses.

ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

This section provides recommendations for school regarding an accident or illness.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your accident or illness procedures:

- School personnel should immediately call 911 and appropriate emergency personnel.
- The names and location of staff members certified or currently trained in first aid, CPR, STB, using the AED, Naloxone, and any other accident- or illness-related training.
- Establish a plan for maintaining a readily available AED and fully stocked first aid, go, and STB kits in different areas of the school building.
- Schools should consider adding signage to classroom doors indicating if school personnel are trained in first aid, CPR, AED, and other emergency response procedures.
- Identify the nature of the student's illness, locate any medical instructions provided by parents, determine if isolation and/or contacting the local public health department is necessary.
- Control of access to the area where the impacted student(s) receive assistance.
- Notify parents/guardians or other family members of the impacted student(s).
- Utilize emergency check-out procedures for parents/guardians to check students out of school during an emergency or crisis.
- Establish a plan for the school nurse to document any illness/injury for students and school personnel.

DIABETES MEDICAL PLAN

Schools must follow a Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP) created by the student’s healthcare provider and signed by a parent or guardian to guide all diabetes-related care.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your student diabetes plan:

- Procedure for implementation of training on caring for students with diabetes by GaDOE and Georgia Association of School Nurses by a school nurse or a contracted professional with expertise in diabetes.
- Procedure for implementation of follow-up training and supervision from the school nurse or other contracted health care professional.
- Procedure for providing information on diabetes-related emergencies to all bus drivers responsible for transportation of students with diabetes.
- Procedure and creation of forms for parents to submit diabetes medical management plans to be reviewed and implemented by the school.
- Procedure for ensuring there is at least one trained diabetes personnel on site at each school and available during regular school hours.
- Procedures for receiving permission from a student’s parent or guardian and authorization through student’s diabetes medical management plan for a student to be able to attend diabetes management and treatment in the classroom, on school grounds, or at a school related activity and possess appropriate supplies and equipment.

NALOXONE/OVERDOSES

Schools are authorized and required to maintain a supply of naloxone, a medication that temporarily stops the effects of opioids and helps a person resume breathing after an opioid overdose. For more information regarding overdose prevention, visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/stop-overdose/caring/naloxone.html>

School administration should also be aware of the Georgia 988 Lifeline the state’s connection to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, a free, confidential, 24/7 mental health crisis support service for anyone in Georgia experiencing emotional distress, suicidal thoughts, or a behavioral health crisis. For more information regarding 988 resources and training, visit the Georgia 988 Lifeline website at <https://988ga.org/resources>

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be considered when someone is experiencing an opioid-related overdose:



- Procedures to prepare teachers on how to monitor students until emergency responders can get to the school site.
- Training for school staff on recognizing early signs of opioid overdose, including changes in breathing, consciousness, or behavior.
- Clear protocols for immediately notifying the school nurse, administrators, and emergency medical services.
- Easily accessible emergency response kits containing gloves, CPR masks, and step-by-step instructions for overdose response.
- First responders may administer or provide an opioid antagonist for the purpose of saving the life of a person experiencing an opioid-related overdose.
- Maintain accurate emergency contact information and medical alerts for students with known health risks.
- Ensure naloxone (Narcan) is available in multiple strategic locations on campus and that designated staff are trained to use it.
- Develop clear communication procedures to keep students away from the incident area while maintaining privacy and safety.
- Establish partnerships with local health departments and community organizations to provide prevention education and substance use resources for families.

THREAT OR OCCURRENCE OF SUICIDE AT SCHOOL

Suicide prevention refers to a coordinated set of strategies, programs, and actions designed to reduce the risk of suicide, support individuals who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviors and strengthen the protective factors that help keep people safe. Schools must implement comprehensive suicide awareness and prevention measures to protect student well-being. All certificated school personnel must receive annual training in suicide awareness and prevention, using materials approved by the GaDOE in consultation with behavioral health experts. Each school district must also adopt a student suicide prevention policy that outlines procedures for prevention, intervention, and postvention, using a model policy developed by the GaDOE.

This section offers information about developing procedures for handling suicide or the threat of suicide, as well as recommended suicide awareness guides provided by GaDOE.

Resources are also available through DBHDD's Apex program through the Office of Federal Grants and Suicide Prevention and 9-8-8 services. The Apex program promotes collaboration between community mental health providers and schools to provide school-based services and support, including training for school staff, in hopes of facilitating the right care at the right time for children, young adults, and families. The DBHDD Office of Federal Grants and Suicide Prevention offers a variety of suicide prevention training opportunities, and connections to other resources and partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your threat or occurrence of suicide at school awareness and prevention procedures:

- A plan for coordinating response activities to the threat of suicide or occurrence at school.
- Procedures for staff to contact appropriate school administration, law enforcement, and other first responders immediately upon learning of the suicide or threat of suicide.
- A plan to train school personnel in suicide awareness.
- Procedures to ensure contact with parents/guardians or other family members to inform them of the student/staff suicide or threat of suicide.
- A plan to collect appropriate resources necessary to respond to students and staff reflections of grief and fear (It is recommended that each school access additional information using the [After a Suicide Toolkit](#)).
- Procedures to ensure school personnel receive annual youth violence & suicide awareness prevention training from GaDOE, DBHDD, or the local school system.
- Procedures for the creation of a student-led youth violence prevention club whose goal is to sustain awareness of activities related to suicide and violence prevention. This club shall:
 - Be open to all members of the student body.
 - Engage in awareness activities related to youth suicide prevention, youth violence prevention, and social inclusion.
 - Foster opportunities for student leadership development.
 - Have at least one administrator, teacher, or other school personnel serve as a faculty advisor.
- Procedures for the creation and continued operations of an anonymous reporting program by July 1, 2026.

DEATH AT SCHOOL

Schools should be prepared in the event of a death during a school day.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your death at school procedures:

- A procedure for administrative staff to contact appropriate school administration, law enforcement, and other first responders immediately upon learning of the death of a staff member or student.
- A procedure to secure the area and keep all students away.
- A process to implement lockdown procedures by school personnel (*refer to Attachment B: Lockdown Procedure on page 74 of this guide*).



- A procedure that includes notification protocols with details for the notification steps administrative staff should take to contact everyone listed in this section.
- A plan to manage internal and external communications, including the news media, following your school system’s procedures for media contact.
- A procedure to communicate, respond to, and monitor student/staff reactions and coordinate with counseling staff for grief and fear resources.

BOMB THREAT/BOMB

School administrators should consider specific procedures in the event of a bomb threat issued to the school and/or the placement of a bomb on school premises. This section provides information about bomb threat responses and recommended procedures for dealing with bombs placed on school premises. It is important to remember the following:

1. Contact local public safety/law enforcement personnel for bomb threats.
2. Have a copy of the Bomb Threat Assessment Questionnaire next to each school phone. The questionnaire is a separate document that should be provided to law enforcement personnel and will become evidence (*refer to Attachment A: Bomb Threat Assessment Questionnaire on page 73*).
3. The person receiving the threat should not hang up or disconnect from the individual, making the threat.
4. All bomb threats should be taken seriously.
5. Staff should understand the difference between an Unattended Item and a Suspicious Item. A suspicious item is any object suspected of containing explosives or other hazardous material.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your bomb threat/bomb procedures:

DAILY PRECAUTIONS

- Call 911 immediately.
- A plan to routinely check school areas for any suspicious items.
- A plan to ensure school personnel understand that a suspicious item should never be moved or touched.
- A procedure to notify school administrators to contact law enforcement when a suspicious item is found on the premises.
- A procedure to implement isolation plans for the suspicious item until law enforcement personnel have assessed the item.
- A plan for lockdown of classrooms and other rooms when not in use.
- A procedure with details on how school personnel should respond to a bomb threat.
- A procedure for the evacuation needs of persons with disabilities and students with IEPs.
- A procedure for check-outs that are ready to initiate for parents/guardians to check students out of school during the emergency or crisis.

- A plan to conduct a credibility assessment in conjunction with local public safety personnel, followed by a threat assessment. If the threat is credible, consult with local authorities and begin to activate the emergency evacuation protocol.
- A procedure to move students and school personnel to predetermined locations and/or barriers that have been identified through Bomb Threat Response Training.
- A plan to redirect students to alternative locations, if the predetermined routes pass near the location of the bomb or device.
- A plan to ensure all school personnel and students have left the building and a plan to confirm that the building has been cleared.
- A plan to take the emergency evacuation kit to the predetermined location.
- A plan to account for all students by checking with teachers in the predetermined locations.

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended the following be included in your suspicious package procedures:

- A procedure on how to recognize and handle suspicious packages, with emphasis that a suspicious package should never be moved or touched.
- A procedure to conduct a credibility assessment in conjunction with local public safety personnel, followed by a threat assessment.
- A plan for routinely checking school areas for any suspicious package(s).

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

During an emergency, whether a natural or manmade disaster, schools may be required to shelter-in-place. This section provides schools with an opportunity to detail their shelter-in-place procedures for building occupants when necessary, during the school day and for sheltering at the school overnight.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your shelter-in-place procedures:

SHELTER-IN-PLACE (STUDENTS REMAIN IN THE BUILDING OVERNIGHT)

- A plan for school personnel to monitor and provide updates on weather conditions that may create the necessity for overnight housing.
- A plan for school personnel to secure the building and limit student movement.
- A procedure to ensure access to food, water, medical supplies, sleeping areas, communications, utilities, and first aid kits.
- A procedure to notify local EMAs and public safety personnel.



- A procedure for contacting the Service Center for HVAC and other system control points that are centralized, to ensure the school's climate control system is not turned off.
- A procedure for additional accommodations regarding power outages (e.g., identify supplies for overnight housing such as generators, cots, and food).
- A procedure for school personnel to contact and provide instructions to parents/guardians and a procedure for parents who elect to pick up their student despite the shelter in place order.
- A plan to secure designated areas of the building to house students, divide students into age-appropriate small groups, accommodate students with disabilities and IEPs, and isolate students who become unruly during the shelter-in-place.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

During an emergency, whether a natural or manmade disaster, schools may be required to close to maintain the health and safety of students and school personnel.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your school closure procedures:

- A procedure to instruct school personnel on where to find school closure information.
- A procedure of notification to inform parents/guardians of school closures.
- A procedure to check on the condition of buildings and surrounding neighborhoods.
- A plan for clear communication with law enforcement and emergency management agencies to stay apprised of nearby emergencies which might impact the school.
- Plans to keep students and staff away from possible hazardous conditions.
- Plans to inform parents/guardian of early school closures.
- Plans for contacting school bus drivers regarding student pick-up during the school day.
- A procedure to ensure all students and school personnel have left the building.

TRANSPORTATION

Each school system's transportation department must implement and maintain a current transportation policy that all drivers should know and follow.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following supplemental suggestions be included in your transportation policy:

- A plan to thoroughly inspect the bus, van, or other transportation vehicles prior to and after completing routes.

- A plan to ensure that all riders and their parents/guardians are familiar with rules and expectations for behavior on buses during transportation. These rules and procedures should be included within your district’s student discipline code.
- A plan for knowing your severe weather procedures and pre-identify shelter areas along your route.
- A procedure to identify areas on your route that require special attention, such as railroad crossings, industrial intersections, and areas known for criminal or gang activity.
- A plan for if an emergency occurs and students are released, ensure that emergency release procedures are completed.
- A plan to always park buses, vans, and other transportation vehicles in well-lit areas, making sure to secure vehicles and remove keys.
- A plan to maintain an accurate roster of individuals requiring transportation.

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

- School bus drivers must check mirrors before moving the bus, engage parking brakes before loading or unloading passengers and ensure that the “stop arm” is displayed until all passengers are safely on the roadway.
- Drivers and monitors should maintain current CPR and first aid certifications.
- Do not leave keys inside an unattended bus, van, or other transportation vehicle.
- Frequently check all cameras and communications equipment to ensure operability.
- Review pre and post route safety checks.



ADDY'S LAW

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that schools consider the following guidance in the school bus protocols:

- A plan to require safer bus route planning as school districts must design bus routes that avoid requiring students to crossroads with speed limits of 40 mph or higher.
- A plan to encourage stops on the same side of the road as school administrators are urged to place bus stops, so students do not cross multilane or high-speed roads when possible.
- A plan to implement regular driver training refreshers as bus drivers should receive ongoing training regarding safe stop procedures, hazard awareness, updated traffic laws, and best practices for student loading and unloading.
- A procedure for enhancing bus stop visibility for adequate lighting, signage, and clear lines of sight to ensure drivers can easily identify where buses will stop and where students gather.
- A plan to use bus monitors or staff at high-risk stops with heavy traffic or limited visibility.
- A plan to strengthen communication with parents through consistent reminders to parents about safe pickup and drop-off behavior, including arriving early, avoiding illegal parking, and modeling safe crossing habits.
- A plan to adopt clear student behavior expectations by establishing and reinforcing expectations for student conduct at bus stops.
- A procedure for evaluating bus stop locations annually by conducting yearly reviews of all bus stops to ensure they continue to meet safety standards.
- A procedure for how to equip buses with safety technology to use available safety systems.



AFTER-HOURS SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following after-hours school function considerations be included in your procedures:

- A plan to assign staff to manage the scheduling and coordination of after-school activities and community use, including events such as voting and elections. This staff member should also maintain written records of all scheduled uses, contracts, and agreements.
- A plan for contractual agreements (MOU's/MOA's) with community organizations and other non-school event sponsors should specify security requirements (supervision, security personnel, etc.) for using school facilities after-hours.
- A plan for a school representative to always meet with the facility's user before using the site to discuss accessibility, expectations for using the facility, known hazards, and rules.
- A plan to ensure all personnel using the building are familiar with emergency procedures (i.e., fire evacuations, safe sheltering locations, and emergency contacts). Test emergency procedures for before-and-after school events like you would for events that occur during normal school hours.
- A procedure to limit the number of open doors accessible to outsiders and ensure that procedures for building access control are strong during after-hours and weekend events.
- A plan to restrict after-school and weekend activities to limited areas of the school campus. If possible, avoid having activities spread out over school grounds. If multiple activities are taking place, identify ways to contain them to designated areas.
- A plan to restrict access to sections of the building not being used for after-school activities, being sure to comply with fire code standards.
- A procedure for how to meet at the conclusion of the use of the facility to ensure that no damage to the site has occurred and that all terms of the contract have been met.
- A plan to have a GEMA/HS site assessment conducted to identify security risks for your facility during and after instructional hours.



OFF-CAMPUS SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following off-campus school function considerations be included in your school safety plan:

- A plan to assign a staff member to coordinate research into potential travel concerns and contact security at the destination site for a safety assessment.
- A plan to obtain parental consent forms allowing the students to take part in the off-campus function and obtain medical release forms with emergency contact numbers for all people, parents, and legal guardians.
- A procedure to ensure adequate staff and volunteers supervising the students.
- A procedure to make every attempt to have at least one person trained in CPR and first aid available.
- A procedure for requiring chaperones to submit to a background check.
- A plan to meet with your off-campus function sponsor, students, and parents/guardians to discuss concerns.
- A procedure to create a field trip/off-campus function emergency kit that includes items contained in your emergency evacuation kit.
- A plan before departing to review the trip roster and make any additions or deletions of students, staff, or chaperones. On the day of the trip, before departure, review rules for the trip with students.
- A plan to ensure all staff, chaperones, and the school have proper means of communication to contact each other and emergency services if necessary.
- A procedure to designate check-in times and locations, if applicable.

FIRE

Fire or smoke in the school requires immediate evacuation of the building. A safe, orderly evacuation depends on effective fire drill practices. The website of the Georgia Office of the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner (<https://oci.georgia.gov/safety-fire-reporting-education>) provides information about safety fire reporting and education.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your fire protocols:

- A procedure to ensure all school personnel and students practice fire drills and evacuation procedures at least once a month, including the use of alternative evacuation routes as a part of preparedness best practices.
- A procedure to ensure the fire alarm system is inspected and operational.
- Plans for school personnel to receive training on how to use a fire extinguisher.

- Plans to monitor all fire extinguisher locations and ensure these locations are clearly marked and regularly inspected.
- Procedures to train school personnel to account for all students by checking with teachers in the assembly area(s).
- Procedures to survey students at the assembly area for injuries/trauma.
- Procedures to train school personnel and students to remain in the assembly area(s) until the all-clear signal/message is sent.
- A plan for emergency check-out procedures, which includes requiring identification and using student attendance logs.
- Initiate the emergency evacuation of persons with disabilities and students with IEPs through the designated evacuation routes and plans.
- Conduct building checks by monitoring hallways, restrooms, lounges, cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and all other applicable facilities.
- Take the emergency evacuation kit, first aid kit, AED, and all other appropriate emergency kits/devices to the assembly area(s).

CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL, NUCLEAR, & EXPLOSIVES (CBRNE)

CBRNE incidents may include exposure or threat of exposure to explosive, flammable, combustible, corrosive, oxidizing, toxic, infectious, or radioactive materials on school premises. This section assists schools with preparedness procedures to address exposure or the threat of exposure involving hazardous materials inside and outside of school buildings. Schools should be prepared for CBRNE events which occur both inside the school and the surrounding neighborhood.

Biological threats may involve an infectious disease with the potential to spread and cause an outbreak. Hazardous materials threats can be grouped into five general categories: chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive. The recommendations below include potential responses to the receipt of a threat or actual bacteria or microorganism-laced letter, box, container, or envelope.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your hazardous material threat/accident procedures:

PREPARATION – INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE BUILDING

- Identify potential hazardous material on campus and adjacent to campus and ensure this information is complete and accurate by coordinating with local emergency management personnel (e.g., hazardous materials maintained at school, above-ground industrial storage containers, railroad tracks, etc.).



- Establish procedures to determine evacuation routes for building occupants when a CBRNE event requires an emergency evacuation due to hazardous material.
- Establish procedures for when a CBRNE incident requires a lockdown and when an all-clear signal/message is received from emergency personnel.
- Establish safe routes and assembly areas for staff and students inside and outside of the building that include persons with disabilities and students with IEPs with specific plans on how to assist through the evacuation.
- Establish procedures to initiate emergency check-out that include an orderly check-out process requiring identification and using student attendance logs.

PREPARATION – INSIDE THE BUILDING

- Establish procedures to immediately remove students/school personnel from the area.
- Develop procedures to initiate an emergency evacuation following the designated emergency evacuation routes and plans.
- Assign school personnel to assist persons with disabilities through the evacuation.
- Establish procedures to seal off the area(s) around and near the accident.
- Train school personnel to avoid any contact with hazardous material.
- Develop procedures to immediately shut down air-conditioning and ventilation units.
- Create a plan to train school personnel on how to provide emergency responders with a list of chemicals in the building, including Safety Data Sheets.
- Establish procedures to decontaminate students and school personnel.

PREPARATION – OUTSIDE THE BUILDING

- Establish procedures to remove all students and school personnel from athletic fields and playground areas and back into the school.
- Designate school personnel to implement dismissal procedures to minimize staff and student exposure due to hazardous conditions.
- Designate school personnel to contact transportation to keep school buses out of the hazardous material accident/threat area.
- Establish procedures to inform school personnel of precautionary measures being taken due to a report of an incident near the school.
- Develop procedures to close all windows and outside doors.
- Establish protocols for shutting down air-conditioning and ventilation units and/or contacting the facilities director to do so. School personnel will also need to prepare to move students away from windows and doors.
- Establish procedures to quickly evacuate based on directions from emergency personnel.
- Develop procedures for having staff members trained in first aid on alert.
- Determine the process for inspecting the building after the incident for any contamination.

CHEMICAL THREATS

- Train school personnel who handle chemical threats to be aware of proper use and storage policies and procedures.
- Establish a chemical storage and handling policy that addresses how chemicals should be safely stored, labeled, and secure, as well as who should have access to these chemicals and chemical storage locations.
- Chemicals should not be stored in areas that are occupied by or accessible to students.
- Spot inspections should be performed periodically throughout the school year.
- Create and maintain an up-to-date map of the location and storage pattern of chemical storage rooms and cabinets in your school.
- Conduct at least annual inspections of classrooms, janitorial closets, and chemical storage rooms and cabinets in your school to ensure the integrity of chemicals and storage structures.
- Inspect and test emergency equipment (e.g., eyewash stations) as well as fume hoods and ventilation systems/exhaust fans at least on an annual basis.
- Ensure you have chemical information for all chemicals on site.

BIOLOGICAL THREAT

- Train school personnel who handle mail and packages to recognize unusual packages or letters, as the school may be the recipient of or a threat to receive a bacteria- or microorganism-laced letter, box, container, or envelope. (Staff should look for excess postage on a small package or letter, which indicates that the object was not weighed by the post office; no postage or non-cancelled postage; handwritten notes such as “to be opened by Mr. Smith;” or leaks, stains, or sharp points).
- Students, volunteers, and untrained personnel should NOT be allowed to open or handle school mail.
- Train school personnel to isolate the letter or package and leave the area.
- Establish procedures to isolate and identify victims (name, address, and telephone numbers) who have come in contact with the letter or package. This information should be given to first responders, health officials, and local EMAs.
- Establish a protocol to determine if the school is safe to return to normal operations in coordination with local EMA, if operations are required to be shut down.
- Establish procedures to notify school personnel and parents/guardians about the status of the school in consultation with local law enforcement personnel.

RADIOLOGICAL THREATS

RESPONSE:

- Report incident by notifying:
 - School Resource Officer
 - Fire Department: Call 9-1-1 (Specify radiation)
 - Emergency Management Agency



RADIATION SOURCE – INSIDE THE BUILDING:

- If there is a radiation emergency from a release or a source found inside the school, evacuate the area/building immediately.
- Do not touch the source or try to clean up a release.
- Move students and staff as far from the sources as quickly as possible.
- Close the doors or block off the area with DO NOT ENTER signs.
- Follow protocols to report the incident to officials and call 911 and indicate radiation.
- Assess the persons who discovered the source or were in the area when release occurred. Assume they are contaminated and follow decontamination protocols immediately.
- If the person is experiencing life-threatening conditions, call 911 immediately.

RADIATION EMERGENCY – DECONTAMINATION PROCEDURES:

- Remove any clothing that had contact with the source or release. (*Removing clothing removes most of the contamination.*)
- Bag clothing and personal items in a plastic bag and seal it shut.
- Gently wash contaminated hands or any other exposed skin with soap and water. Dry with a clean towel. Do not scrub or use harsh cleaners. Shower if available to wash the entire body.
- If no water is available, use a wet wipe to gently wipe the area one time and dispose of the wipe after each use.
- Anyone following decontamination protocols will need to be assessed with a radiation detection instrument to be sure any contamination is gone.

SHELTER IN PLACE:

- When radiation is found to be outside the school, sheltering in place may be safer than an evacuation until authorities can determine location of source and a safe evacuation route.
- Move students as far as possible from the source if it is near the building.
- Close any doors or windows near the source.
- Advise anyone who has met the source to follow decontamination protocols.
- Notify authorities of a radiation emergency and wait for them to investigate before releasing students or evacuating.
- If students are outside of the building near potential radiation, they will need to enter a designated area in the building and follow decontamination procedures.

NUCLEAR THREAT

- School personnel should get students and staff inside as quickly as possible. Get inside the nearest building to avoid radiation (brick or concrete are best).
- School personnel should instruct staff and students to remove any contaminated clothing and wipe off unprotected skin if they were outside after the fallout arrives.
- Students and school personnel should immediately go to the basement or middle of the building (stay away from the other walls and roof).

- Remain inside for 24 hours unless the local emergency management agency provides other instructions.
- School personnel should stay tuned into any media available for official information such as when it is safe to exit and where to go.
- Cellphone, text messaging, television, and internet services may be disrupted or unavailable.
- Maintain battery operated and hand crank radios within a designated location within the school after a nuclear threat.

EXPLOSIVES

- Contact 911/emergency services.
- Coordinate with public safety to have alternative evacuation sites 1,000 feet (about 304.8 m) away from your school. If such a distance is not possible, evacuate as far away as possible and place safe barriers (as much space as possible) between you and the building or the suspected location of the explosive.
- Train school personnel to isolate the suspected explosive and leave the area.
- Procedures to evacuate and seal off the area of the building, if deemed necessary.
- Establish procedures to isolate and identify victims (name, address, and telephone numbers) who have come in contact with the explosive device. This information should be given to first responders, health officials, and local EMAs.
- Establish a protocol to determine if the school is safe to return to normal operations in coordination with local EMA, if operations are required to be shut down.
- Establish procedures to notify school personnel and parents/guardians about the status of the school in consultation with local law enforcement personnel.

TERRORISM

An act of terrorism involves the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political, social, or ideological objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your terrorism procedures:

- Call 911.
- Schools should give serious consideration to additional heightened security procedures during times of terrorist threats such as implementing lockdown procedures.
- Train teachers and other school personnel to evaluate and refine security plans along with regular testing and conducting exercises of school safety procedures.
- Encourage school personnel to maintain a “heightened awareness” for suspicious activity and to report these to local law enforcement agency.
- Provide special attention to perimeter security and access control issues.



- Secure roof hatches and eliminate structural items that facilitate easy access to school roofs. Make sure that classroom windows are secured at the end of the school day.
- Maintain a proactive effort of visitor access and control. Reduce the number of doors accessible from the outside to one designated entrance.
- Evaluate security measures at school transportation facilities.
- Secure access to utilities, boiler rooms, and other maintenance/facilities operation's locations.
- Evaluate food and beverage service stock, storage, and protection procedures. *Determine if schools have adequate water, food, and related supplies if students and staff would need to remain at the school for an extended period.*
- Assess school health and medical preparedness. Make sure that schools maintain an adequate number and level of emergency kits and medical supplies.
- Conduct a status check of emergency communications mechanisms. Be sure that two-way radio units and cell phones are functioning and have back-up batteries charged.
- Review procedures for emergency communications with parents. Notify parents in advance how school officials communicate with them in an emergency.
- Review procedures for mobilizing mental health services for students and staff in the event of a crisis.
- Identify higher-risk facilities, organizations, and potential terrorist targets in the community surrounding schools. Such entities might include military facilities, government offices and facilities, nuclear power plants, airports and airport flight paths, railroads, chemical companies

INTRUDER/SUSPICIOUS PERSON

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your intruder/suspicious person procedures:

- Procedures established and understood by all staff who have authorized access to campus, assisted with the use of identification or access control cards if possible.
- Procedures should include policies on visits to campus by contractors, visiting speakers, vendors, parents of students, former students, and family members of staff. Policies should also include procedures for substitute personnel.
- Physical barriers, signage, and procedures to prevent unauthorized direct access to school facilities.
- Procedures should include measures for visitors.
- Procedures for using a visitor identification name tag system.

- Plan to keep exterior doors locked and post signs instructing visitors to use the main entrance.
- Plan for school personnel to periodically check all exterior doors to ensure they are secure.
Note: Schools should NOT use chains to secure exterior doors; they should be accessible as emergency exits.
- Establish procedures to monitor the location of the intruder/suspicious person using surveillance cameras, monitors, and walkie-talkies in communicating with law enforcement.
- Call 911, if deemed necessary.



HOSTAGE/BARRICADE

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your hostage/barricade procedures:

- Direction to call 911.
- Procedures for when it is appropriate to order a lockdown versus an evacuation.
- Procedures instructing school personnel and students not to open locked doors for persons trying to enter the building from the outside.
- Procedures to notify school personnel on playgrounds/athletic fields of the lockdown and to provide them with instructions to move to a designated safe assembly area.
- Procedures to notify school bus drivers to remain away from the school.
- A plan for school personnel and students to remain in classrooms until the all-clear signal/message is given, if a lockdown is ordered.
- Procedures instructing school personnel and students not in a classroom to seek protection in a nearby classroom as lockdown procedures are initiated (*refer to Attachment B: Lockdown Procedure on page 74 of this guide*).



- A procedure to initiate an orderly emergency check-out process requiring identification and using student attendance logs.
- A plan for communicating with parents/guardians.

SCHOOL DISRUPTION/CIVIL DISTURBANCE

School disruptions and civil disturbances can occur both onsite (on school grounds or property) and offsite (in surrounding areas) and may include incidents such as fights, student walkouts, or protests. Parents and community members might also attempt to protest at or near the school.

This section provides recommendations for school administrators to consider in the development of their school safety plans regarding best practices for responding to these disturbances. The guide provides a checklist of response activities, including designating school personnel who are trained to report disturbances, coordinating with law enforcement, and implementing additional procedures with law enforcement to handle student disruptions and civil disturbances at various levels.

Disturbances can be categorized into three levels:

Level 1 Disturbance: Disruption is confined to one area and is not a threat to students/staff.

Level 2 Disturbance: Disruption forces are moving or are in multiple locations and/or pose a threat to students/staff.

Level 3 Disturbance: Disruption is widespread and is a serious threat to students/staff.

✦ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your school disruption/civil disturbance procedures:

- Train school personnel on the 3 levels of disturbance and appropriate actions for each.
- Instruct school personnel to call 911 for Level 2 or 3 disturbances.
- Train school personnel on how to report disturbances, isolate the disruption, and the process to clear the immediate area, including restrooms and hallways.
- Establish procedures to order and implement a lockdown for Level 2 or 3 disturbances.
- Establish procedures to assemble staff members trained in CPR, and first aid, if needed.
- Train school personnel on de-escalation.
- Establish procedures to closely supervise students during dismissal and boarding of buses after a disturbance.
- Establish procedures to coordinate with police to ensure adequate protection of students/school personnel following Level 2 or 3 disturbances until premises are clear.

STUDENT RUNAWAY/ABDUCTION/MISSING STUDENT

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your student runaway, abduction, or missing student procedures:

PREPARATION

- Procedures to account for every student at the start and throughout the school day.
- Procedures for daily attendance and notification of parents when students are absent.
- Procedures for contacting law enforcement for any student with an extended absence(s) not explained by a parent or legal guardian.
- Procedures for maintaining field trip and away game student rosters on each bus, with a copy sent to the school.
- Procedures to chaperone and account for all students at the field trip destination upon arrival and prior to departure.
- A procedure for school personnel to report any suspicious persons loitering on or near the school.
- Awareness campaigns for students to report to school counselors or administrators if they believe they are being stalked, threatened, or bullied.
- Procedures to limit access to the building and require identification, along with accountability procedures for adults who enter the school.

RESPONSE

(State law prohibits the exchange of child custody on school property.)

- Call 911 immediately.
- Consider initiating a lockdown if deemed appropriate until all other students are accounted for. Refer to Attachment B: Lockdown Procedures on page 74 of this guide for information regarding lockdown procedures.
- Instruct school personnel to initiate a plan on how to handle a missing child or abduction.
- Provide a description or picture of the missing student immediately to law enforcement.
- Follow notification procedures to keep parents/guardians informed.
- Notify transportation if the student normally rides the bus.
- Conduct a room-by-room search for the student and other potential hiding areas.
- Survey students from the missing student's class for information.
- Closely monitor siblings of the missing student, following established procedures.
- Notify other schools if siblings of the missing student attend a different school.
- Follow procedures to secure the perimeter of the building.
- Establish procedures to curtail outside activities until the situation has stabilized.



REPORT OF WEAPON ON CAMPUS

It is generally unlawful to carry or possess weapons within school safety zones, at school functions, or on school-provided transportation, with specific exceptions. This section addresses procedures for responding to a report of a weapon on campus for all appropriate school personnel and law enforcement officials.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your weapon preparedness plan:

PREPAREDNESS

- Establish procedures for responding when a person carries, possesses, or controls a weapon within the school safety zone, at a school function, or on school transportation, including immediate notification to the school resource officer or security director to call 911 if a weapon is suspected. Staff should be prepared to provide full details about the individual, their location, and the possible weapon.
- Create and post signs in designated areas stating that the area is a “Weapon-free and Violence-free School Safety Zone.”
- Define procedures for the school resource officer or other law enforcement officer, with an administrator, to take immediate possession of the weapon, escort the person to a safe location, and follow required protocols for search and seizure.
- Include procedures for safely separating the individual from their belongings, ensuring the person walks in front of the escort, and preventing the individual from putting hands in pockets, approaching belongings, or entering classrooms or restrooms while being escorted.
- Clearly state that non-law enforcement personnel should generally not confront or attempt to disarm a person suspected of possessing a weapon and should immediately contact law enforcement.

EXCEPTIONS

- Ensure exceptions are in place for individuals acting in a professional or authorized capacity.
- Students or competitors using sports equipment for legitimate athletic purposes; persons engaged in military or law enforcement training programs; and individuals performing professional duties such as peace officers, law enforcement, prosecutors, medical examiners, coroners, and investigators.
- Persons with written authorization specifying the approved weapon and duration of authorization; individuals lawfully possessing a weapon in a vehicle while picking up a student; and teachers or others authorized to possess or carry weapons when secured in a locked vehicle compartment or locked firearms rack.

ACTIVE ATTACKS

An active attack involves weaponry and active shooter events. Additionally, active attacks can involve vehicle attacks, knife attacks, and any other type of event in which the primary concern is an attempt at murder or mass murder. The following recommendations regarding active attack situations should be used to develop a protocol in line with the policies of your local law enforcement agency. More specifically, this section emphasizes that schools review their lockdown and emergency evacuation procedures (refer to Attachment B: Lockdown Procedures on page 74 of this guide).

♦ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your active attack protocols:

- Ensure that active shooter training is available to school personnel and provide opportunities to practice active shooter response.
- A procedure to have designated school personnel to periodically check all exterior doors to ensure that they are secured.
- Procedures to prevent unauthorized access to school facilities.
- Procedures to lock exterior doors and have signs advising visitors to use the main entrance.
- A plan to refer to the preferred protocols and expectations of the local law enforcement agency.
- A reliable communication system for communicating emergencies to decision makers, staff, students, and parents as appropriate.
- Instructions communicated immediately to parents, so they do not arrive on campus and block access for law enforcement and emergency responders.
- Establish procedures to immediately implement the active attack protocol by all trained school personnel.
- Have a plan to immediately order a lockdown and initiate lockdown procedures.
- Establish procedures for announcing a lockdown or emergency evacuation.



TORNADO

♦ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your tornado procedures:

PREPAREDNESS

- At least twice a year, school personnel and students should practice mandatory severe weather drills (refer to the National Weather Service Severe Weather Preparedness Guide for Schools: www.weather.gov/grb/schools).
- Each school building should have a weather-monitoring device to alert staff about tornado watches and warnings.
- School personnel should have a plan to secure weather radios, maintain batteries, and conduct monthly testing for each radio.
- Establish procedures to designate the best areas to serve as shelters and share the area locations with school personnel (e.g., interior rooms, hallways, lowest floors, enclosed smaller areas away from glass, etc.).
- Develop and update diagrams of the building with marked safe areas, including the quickest routes to access the safe areas.
- Develop a plan detailing which areas to avoid during a tornado watch or warning such as the gym and other areas with wide roof spans and glass.
- Develop a communication plan to quickly move students and school personnel to safe locations in the building.

RESPONSE TO WATCH

- A procedure to move students to predesignated safe areas.
- Procedures to communicate weather conditions to all areas and a plan to coordinate response activities.
- Procedures to communicate to bus drivers and personnel outside the building to notify them of the tornado watch.
- Procedures to begin securing the building by closing windows and doors.
- A plan for school personnel/students to seek cover in the predesignated safe areas while taking a protective seated position with hands/arms covering the head, neck, and face.
- A plan for school personnel to secure or store articles, when possible, that may become missiles indoors.
- A plan to coordinate school personnel who have been trained in CPR, STB, and first aid to be assigned to the predesignated safe areas.
- Procedures to prohibit school personnel and students from leaving the building during a watch.
- A plan to instruct teachers to keep their class rosters with them during the drill and to remain with the class.
- Procedures for deciding if and when students can be released from school (early dismissal).

RESPONSE TO WARNING

- A procedure to move students to predesignated safe areas.
- Procedures to communicate weather conditions to all areas and a plan to coordinate response activities.
- Procedures to communicate to bus drivers and personnel outside the building to notify them of the tornado warning.
- Procedures to begin securing the building by closing windows and doors.
- A plan for school personnel/students to seek cover in the predesignated safe areas, while taking a protective seated position with hands/arms covering the head, neck, and face.
- A plan for school personnel to secure or store articles, when possible, that may become missiles indoors.
- A plan to coordinate school personnel who have been trained in CPR, STB, and first aid to be assigned to the predesignated safe areas.
- Procedures to prohibit school personnel/students from leaving the building during a warning.
- A plan to instruct teachers to keep their class rosters with them during the drill and to remain with class ensuring all students are present and are taking safety precautions.
- Procedures to decide if and when students can be released from school (*Students should not be released during an active tornado warning*).
- Procedures to inspect the building after the tornado and before students return.
- A procedure for determining whether to initiate early dismissal.





FLOODING

Schools must consider incidents involving flooding within the building as well as flooding or flash flooding in the neighborhood. This section addresses flooding by providing evacuation procedures and additional emergency preparedness recommendations for schools to use in the development of their school safety plan.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your flooding procedures:

- A plan for the school to coordinate with the local EMA on local flood plains.
- A plan for school personnel to monitor weather and other local conditions in the affected areas.
- Procedures to shut off the water at mains to prevent contaminated water from backing up into the school water supply system.
- Procedures for determining alternative transportation routes to avoid flood-prone areas and how to handle transportation for students whose neighborhood is unreachable or not safe for drop off.
- A plan to closely monitor dismissal procedures to keep students away from flooded areas and flooding.
- A procedure to immediately evacuate students in accordance with emergency early dismissal procedures when there is a risk of flooding, or if students cannot be evacuated, to implement shelter-in-place procedures.
- Procedures to immediately and appropriately respond to a flash flood.
- A procedure detailing how and where to relocate students from low-lying levels/areas during a flooding event.

WINTER WEATHER

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following practices be included in your winter weather procedures:

PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS ACCESS LOCAL WINTER WEATHER RISKS

- Consult your local National Weather Service (NWS) office to understand the winter hazards most likely to affect your region and to receive timely forecasts and alerts.
- Identify vulnerabilities across campus, including:
 - Icy walkways, parking lots, and bus loops.
 - Buildings with older heating systems.
 - Areas prone to roof loading (snow/ice accumulation).
 - Portable classrooms that may be more susceptible to cold and wind impacts.

DEFINE DECISION-MAKING THRESHOLDS

- Schools should establish clear criteria for:
 - Delayed starts, early dismissal, or school closure.
 - Suspension of bus routes due to icy or unsafe road conditions.
 - Activation of emergency sheltering if a sudden freeze/storm occurs during school hours.

MONITORING & COMMUNICATION –WEATHER MONITORING

- Assign staff to monitor:
 - NWS watches, warnings, advisories, and real-time updates.
 - Road and traffic conditions.
 - Local emergency management updates.
- Utilize multiple alert systems to ensure redundancy.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

- Notify families and staff through:
 - Automated messaging (phone, text, email).
 - Website banners and social media updates.
 - Local news outlets when needed.
- Provide timely updates on closures, delays, or modified bus schedules.

WINTER WEATHER RESPONSE PROCEDURES-ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, & TRANSPORTATION

- Inspect and treat all walkways, entrances, and parking lots before student arrival.
- Adjust bus routes or consolidate stops if certain roads are deemed unsafe.
- Require drivers to conduct hazard checks and reduce speed as conditions require.
- Provide warm, sheltered waiting areas for early arriving students during extreme cold weather.



BUILDING SAFETY & OPERATIONS

- Ensure heating systems are operational and tested prior to the winter season.
- Protect pipes from freezing by maintaining minimum indoor temperatures.
- Close off unsafe areas where ice accumulation poses a risk (roofs, awnings, stairways).
- Maintain adequate supplies of salt, sand, or ice-melt materials.

SHELTERING PROCEDURES-IF STUDENTS ARE PRESENT DURING THE SUDDEN EVENT

- Move students and staff indoors immediately if:
 - Roads become impassable mid-day.
 - Temperatures drop to dangerous levels.
 - Ice storms pose immediate risk.
- Maintain supervision, provide warm spaces, and initiate parent notifications.

CONTINUITY OF INSTRUCTION

- Maintain plans for remote learning or asynchronous instruction during extended winter weather closures.
- Provide alternative meal distribution if closures may affect food-insecure students.

FAMILY & STAFF PREPAREDNESS

- Share winter weather safety tips with families, including safe travel reminders and proper clothing guidance for extreme cold.



EARTHQUAKE

Parts of Georgia are in a moderate-expected earthquake damage zone according to the US Geological Survey. Therefore, the school administration should be prepared to implement disaster response procedures in the event of an earthquake to coordinate with local emergency management agency.

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your earthquake procedures:

- A plan for school personnel to coordinate with the local EMA.
- A procedure for school personnel and students to take cover under desks, when possible, and cover their heads and necks.
- A procedure for school personnel to stay away from glass, heavy objects that could tilt over, outside windows and doors, shelves, and any objects that could fall.
- A procedure for school personnel to move students away from windows and relocate to the hallways or stairwells.
- A procedure to immediately evacuate students and school personnel using emergency evacuation procedures if the earthquake begins to cause damage to the school building.
- Procedures for school personnel to move away from buildings, trees, fences, vehicles, poles, utility lines, and any other objects that could fall.
- Procedures for conducting a building inspection prior to school personnel and students being allowed to re-enter the building.
- A protocol to determine whether the school is safe to return to normal operations.

HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM/DEPRESSION

◆ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your hurricane/tropical storms/depression procedures:

- Procedures to secure the grounds and facilities prior to the storm making landfall.
- Procedures to monitor weather reports and continuously coordinate with the local EMA.
- A procedure to work with GEMA/HS to develop a plan for providing temporary shelter and for check-in/out procedures for evacuees.
- A procedure to coordinate with the local EMA to carefully survey the building after the hurricane has passed to assess danger post event.
- A training plan to ensure school personnel do not enter the building until the local EMA has completed an assessment.



PANDEMIC AND EPIDEMIC

Emergency response recommendations for pandemics and epidemics that school administrators may include in their School Safety Plan are provided in detail in Section 4 Resources. These recommendations are grounded in the CDC for guidance on preventing infection, planning outbreak responses, and maintaining school operations during public health emergencies.

The sample planning components are based on operational actions divided into seven levels, reflecting increasing severity. Schools should adapt to these components according to local public health directives, CDC guidance, and state requirements.



CYBERSECURITY AND OTHER COMPUTER INTRUSIONS

Cybersecurity is the application of technologies, processes, and controls to protect systems, networks, programs, devices, and data from cyberattacks. It aims to reduce the risk of cyberattacks and protect against the unauthorized exploitation of systems, networks, and technologies. Recommendations provided include details on how school personnel can respond to cyberattacks and computer fortification suggestions for critical infrastructure and for strengthening computer protocols.

GEMA/HS maintains a list of prohibited social media platforms directly or indirectly owned, operated, controlled, monitored, or influenced by a foreign adversary. State of Georgia employees and K-12 public school students are prohibited from installing, using, or visiting any of the listed social media platforms on state equipment. For more details surrounding prohibited foreign adversary social media, visit <https://gema.georgia.gov/what-we-do/homeland-security/prohibited-fa-social-media>

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

It is recommended that the following be included in your protocols for cybersecurity and other computer intrusions:

- Define access to data and demographic information for designated school personnel.
- Develop strategies and describe the concept of appropriate access to private information such as student demographics and grade data.
- Establish a concept for access control and how to limit school data access to only authorized users.
- Determine the equipment needed to access servers and network connections.
- Identify specific network components and the roles of these components.
- Create a plan for school personnel to utilize appropriate networks.
- Develop a plan for school personnel to store and share information using cloud computing.
- Regularly maintain backups and utilize end point protection.
- Ensure all staff have regular cyber security training.
- Demonstrate safe cloud computing practices among school personnel.
- Limit the amount of data available on the school's public website. Staff and student email addresses, phone numbers, detailed facility information, and other sensitive information should be access-controlled and password protected – not public facing.
- Determine a plan for network communication.
- Develop a procedure to differentiate between a network device's MAC and IP addresses.
- Create a plan to compare network topologies.
- Establish layers within the OSI networking model appropriate for your school.



SECTION 4 RESOURCES

Section 4 serves as a comprehensive resources' hub designed to support Georgia schools as they plan for, implement, and continually strengthen their safety initiatives throughout the school year. This section brings together tools, guidance, and reference materials that help administrators align their safety practices with state expectations and best-practice standards. In addition, the GEMA/HS Homeland Security Coordinators are available to assist schools in the development, submission, and approval of school safety plans, ensuring that each plan meets statutory requirements and reflects current safety considerations. By consolidating these resources, this section equips school administrators with quick access to contacts, links, definitions, and additional resources beneficial in the development of their school safety plans.

This section is also essential as it provides schools immediate access to verified tools, expertise, and support systems that strengthen their overall preparedness and response capacity. During a crisis, staff often have limited time to search for guidance, so having a centralized repository of state-approved materials, contact lists, mental-health supports, training modules, and emergency response partners ensures that help is both accessible and actionable when it is needed most. Section 4 promotes consistency across school systems by aligning local practices with statewide expectations and evidence-based recommendations, helping schools avoid gaps in safety planning and ensuring that every building—regardless of size or resources—has the foundational information required to protect students and staff effectively.



LOCAL AREA HOMELAND SECURITY COORDINATORS

The Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency's Homeland Security Coordinators (HSC) serve local area communities and schools by providing guidance and technical assistance on matters of emergency management and preparedness as schools develop their School Safety Plans. The HSC is the conduit to GEMA/HS. An HSC's primary goal is to provide services and assistance, as outlined in Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185. Schools can obtain training and technical assistance by contacting the HSC or GEMA/HS directly.

Georgia law states that GEMA/HS must provide training and technical assistance on emergency management and safe school operations to school systems throughout the state. It may also provide this assistance to private school systems and independent private schools in Georgia. This training and technical assistance must include but not be limited to crisis response team development, site surveys and safety audits, crisis management planning, exercise design, safe school planning, emergency operations planning, search and seizure, bomb threat management, and model school safety plans.

Furthermore, as an agent of the Georgia Homeland Security Task Force, the HSC is a sworn law enforcement agent who provides behavioral threat assessments and investigatory assistance and resource allocation for actionable articulable threats to life that affect schools in Georgia.



The HSC can help with identifying key components within the State of Georgia Guide for School Safety Plans, such as the threat assessment and management process addressing threats of violence. In addition, schools are encouraged to report school safety threats as well as threats to life to their HSC's at their discretion. For more information on school safety, please visit <https://gema.georgia.gov/what-we-do/school-safety>



TRAINING AND SERVICES

In an effort to share knowledge and best practices, GEMA/HS and the GaDOE provide training related to school emergency planning as outlined in the **Georgia Code O.C.G.A. 20-2-1185 (a)(1)**: Training school administrators, teachers, and support staff, including, but not limited to, school resource officers, security officers, secretaries, custodians, and bus drivers, on school violence prevention, school security, school threat assessment, mental health awareness, and school emergency planning best practices. It is recommended that School Safety Plans include details regarding safety and emergency preparedness training. This section provides information on training and services available through GEMA/HS and GaDOE.

GEMA/HS provides Behavioral Threat Assessment training for schools. Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams provide case management assistance and consultation. GEMA/HS coordinates this training and service. Additional training is available across several emergency planning areas, including school violence prevention, school security, school site threat assessment, mental health awareness, and school emergency planning.



GEMA/HS TRAINING OPTIONS

GEMA/HS provides multiple training options for school personnel. Training options are based on school safety issues and are administered through a series of statewide conferences, regional workshops and presentations provided at the request of local communities. A local agency or school may request any of the GEMA/HS training programs <https://gema.georgia.gov/school-safety-training> School officials can



take virtual classes through the GEMA/HS Training Registration System (TRS) through the following link: <https://training.gema.ga.gov/TRS/>



GaDOE TRAINING OPTIONS

GaDOE assists districts, schools, and communities in identifying and addressing student barriers to success while expanding learning opportunities through training and education. In doing so, the agency provides targeted professional learning, technical assistance, and access to statewide initiatives. GaDOE's efforts help schools with emergency preparedness, behavioral supports and wellness information by connecting them with evidence-based practices, high-quality instructional resources, and specialized programs. Through collaboration with educators, families, and community partners, GaDOE works to create a safe and healthy learning environment for students, families, teachers, and communities. For information from GaDOE on emergency preparedness and training, visit the Georgia Center for School Safety website at <https://gacss.org/>

There are also resources to assist schools with training and education through the Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT) project, which partners with professional training providers to deliver evidence-informed courses on topics such as suicide prevention, trauma, general mental health awareness, educator wellness, and more. These trainings are available to schools, districts, RESAs, and community partners across the state. In addition to live or scheduled trainings, GaDOE also offers supplemental mental health resources, including statewide programs like Free Your Feels, Hope Givers, and national supports such as the National Crisis Hotline, all aimed at helping educators, students, and families access tools that strengthen mental health and emotional well-being. Additional information regarding MHAT project can be located at: <https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/50ac485b-6532-4a55-8dbe-d7dc64716341/1/MHAT%20One%20Pager%20%28w%20Overview%29.pdf>

As a complement to the wider MHAT training, the Anti-Gang Endorsement training courses include a training sequence of twenty courses covering multidisciplinary best practices for gang prevention, school safety protocols, emergency response, and situational awareness. In-person sessions often include specialized courses such as Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events, STB, Visual Weapons Screening, and Gang Prevention & Awareness in Schools. For more information regarding School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsements visit the following link:

<https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/SchoolSafetyandAntiGangEndorsement.aspx>

GaDOE also hosts the Georgia Learns website, an online professional learning platform for schools, district staff, and education partners in Georgia and is intended to support increased demands for quality online professional learning. Georgia Learns is an online professional learning platform to support school and district staff, as well as education partners across the state. Georgia Learns offers:

- Online professional development courses for educators and school personnel.
- A modernized platform designed to meet the increasing demand for high-quality online learning.
- Centralized access to training materials, modules, and resources that support instructional improvement and operational effectiveness across Georgia schools.

For information on Georgia Learns, visit <https://portal.doe.k12.ga.us/GeorgiaLearn.aspx?oid=46040>

READY GEORGIA SEAL OF PREPAREDNESS

GaDOE in partnership with GEMA/HS has created the Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness to recognize public schools that go above and beyond in their efforts to provide safe and secure learning environments for their students, faculty, and staff. The Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness is awarded to individual schools on an annual basis who apply and meet criteria in the following categories:

- Emergency Operations Planning
- Drills and Exercises
- Training
- Security Interventions
- Technology
- Data Analysis



The window for the Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness will open each year in September and schools may apply through an online application. The application will require specific documentation of drills, planning, and collaborative practices throughout the school year, in addition to the submission of an approved school safety plan. Lack of appropriate documentation for all components does not necessarily exclude a school from recognition, and each application will be considered based on individual efforts of preparedness. Schools awarded the Seal of Preparedness will be announced the following February.



For more information about the Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness, visit:

https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/8d97403e-4365-4c5d-a22d-7c2ad73d5126/1/Ready%20Georgia%20Seal%20of%20Preparedness_One%20Pager.pdf

If you have questions about the Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness, please reach out to Mark Muma, GaDOE Program Manager for School Safety at mark.muma@doe.k12.ga.us or Jeff Hodges, GaDOE Program Specialist for School Safety at jhodges@doe.k12.ga.us.

BTAM DESCRIPTIONS

GEMA/HS provides training on research and evidence-based processes. GEMA/HS HSC's can also assist in the formation of a school's Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) team and may serve on those teams. Schools may also request technical assistance from GEMA/HS in the development of their BTAM protocols.

BTAM is a systematic process used to identify, assess, and manage individuals who may pose a threat of violence. It is a proactive, fact-based approach that involves multidisciplinary teams from law enforcement, mental health, and other community institutions to determine the likelihood of violence and create intervention plans before an incident occurs.

A behavioral threat assessment is a fact-based, proactive, and systematic process of identifying a situation of concern, inquiring about all available aspects of the situation, and assessing those aspects using all available information. The process then focuses on managing the situation to support and enhance the health and safety of the school and community.

1. Maps must designate Incident Command and Reunification locations, acknowledging they may change based on circumstances.
2. Paper maps must be large, easy to read, and stored securely at the Board of Education, local law enforcement, and multiple school locations. Go-bags must include printed maps and writing tools.
3. Electronic maps must include geocoordinates and integration with PSAP systems or a third-party intelligent data platform.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION KIT ITEMS

During an emergency evacuation, teachers and school personnel should retrieve the nearest box or bag containing the equipment, supplies, and medications needed to provide initial management of life-threatening conditions. Emergency evacuation kits should be housed in at least two separate locations: one in the office area and one at the opposite end of the school. Kits should be easy to transport from one area to another during an emergency. For example, a kit could be housed in a cooler, suitcase, or case that is waterproof, durable, and easy to access. Schools should include details regarding designated locations for the evacuation site and the family assistance center. Kits should be checked twice a year.

Your emergency evacuation kit may include the following:

- A copy of the School Safety Plan
- Writing tablets and pens/pencils
- Permanent markers
- Plain white peel-off name tag stickers
- Student release forms/sign-in and sign-out sheets (paper copy)
- Copy of the School Facility Plan, which should be included in the School Safety Plan
- Floor plan of the building with key (paper copy)
- Site plan of the grounds and surrounding areas (photographs)
- Photographs and/or video depicting the interior/exterior of the building
- Copies of student/staff emergency contact/release information (paper copy)
- Emergency phone numbers of assistance agencies
- Hardcopy of the most recent yearbook, if possible
- A list of students and school personnel, including bus drivers, teachers, administrators
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Bullhorn and extra batteries
- Cellphone and/or walkie-talkie with chargers
- Wi-Fi hotspot with charging cord/batteries
- Supplies for students with disabilities (e.g., medications, assistive devices, etc.)
- Basic first aid kit

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBERILLATOR (AED)

School administration should address AEDs in their School Safety Plans. An AED is a life-saving medical device designed to analyze a person's heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock to those experiencing ventricular fibrillation to restore the heart rhythm to normal. Ventricular fibrillation is the uncoordinated heart rhythm most often responsible for sudden cardiac arrest. <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-31/chapter-11/article-3/section-31-11-53/>

FIRST AID KIT

A first aid kit should be included in your School Safety Plan. It should include items for treating minor cuts and burns. The kit can also be used to assist school personnel managing more serious medical emergencies until first responders arrive. It is useful to keep a basic first aid manual within each first aid kit. Medicines should be checked regularly, and expiration dates are monitored. The school nurse should have a copy of students' medications, including name, dosage, and purpose of each medication.

Your first aid kit may include the following:

- Bandages in a variety of sizes and shapes
- Small, medium, and large sterile gauze dressing
- At least two sterile eye dressings
- Triangular bandages



- Crêpe rolled bandages
- Safety pins
- Disposable sterile gloves
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Alcohol-free cleansing wipes
- Sticky tape
- Thermometer (preferably digital)
- Skin rash cream (hydrocortisone or calendula)
- Cream or spray to relieve insect bites and stings
- Antiseptic cream
- Painkillers such as acetaminophen (or infant acetaminophen for children), aspirin (not to be given to children under 16), or ibuprofen
- Antihistamine cream or tablets
- Distilled water for cleaning wounds
- Eye wash and eye bath
- Basic first aid manual or instruction booklet
- Other Medications (as designated for specific students)

GO KIT

Each teacher should have a go kit ready to transport in an emergency. For example, a go kit might be housed in a small backpack. Go kits may include the following:

- Class rosters with photos
- Supplies and emergency equipment
- Student sign-out sheets for dismissal to parents/guardians
- Snacks/glucose/diabetic supplies/epi-pens
- Student prescriptions and other medications (a list of student allergies in HIPAA compliance form)
- Supplies for students with disabilities (supplies also listed on IEPs)
- Copies of student/staff emergency contact information
- First aid kit (bandages, tape, alcohol swabs)
- List of emergency medical information for students/staff to include medications, allergies, supplies, etc.

STB KIT

A STB kit contains items that school personnel would need to aid individuals who are severely bleeding. Your STB kit may include the following:

- Tourniquet
- Responder emergency trauma dressing
- Wound packing gauze
- Two pairs of nitrile gloves

- Trauma shears
- Permanent marker (small)
- Just-in-time instruction card
- Bleeding control patch
- Red nylon bag

OTHER DEVICES

Other devices may include any medical assistive devices to aid in emergency response. Each device should be housed in a clearly visible, easily accessible area of the school building. School administrators should consider the above emergency kits and devices deemed essential for their school. Contact your local Homeland Security Coordinator for additional assistance with kits.

THREAT OR OCCURRENCE OF SUICIDE AT SCHOOL

A suicide threat or incident requires an immediate, coordinated response that balances safety, confidentiality, and compassion. Schools with established partnerships with local mental health providers, emergency responders, and crisis hotlines can act quickly to secure student safety and ensure appropriate care. Additional resources—such as crisis response protocols, on-call counselors, and access to external support agencies—help staff respond consistently and reduce confusion or delays during critical moments. The following additional resources may be used in the development of your plans.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the Apex program, visit <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/georgia-apex-program>

For information on Suicide Prevention Resources, visit <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/bh-prevention/suicide-prevention>

For information regarding Georgia’s 988 Lifeline, visit <https://988ga.org/>.

Schools should consider the Lockdown Procedures provided by GEMA/HS on page 74 of this guide (Attachment B: Lockdown Procedures) and the [After a Suicide: Toolkit for Schools](#).

PANDEMIC AND EPIDEMIC LEVELS

The following sample components may be used in the development of your school safety plans:

LEVEL 0: PREVENTION & PREPARATION

- Place posters on handwashing, respiratory etiquette, and general infection-control practices in schools and on websites.
- Provide information to staff, students, and parents on hand sanitizers, cough/sneeze etiquette, and symptoms of communicable illnesses.
- Ensure custodial staff receive training on cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting according to CDC infection-control standards.
- Maintain adequate supplies (soap, tissues, hand sanitizer, PPE, cleaning products).



- Establish and test emergency communication protocols, including internal staff “call trees.”
- Provide pandemic-planning guidance for families, consistent with CDC’s recommendations for preparing households during outbreaks.
- Develop plans for maintaining operations with reduced staffing.
- Develop plans to secure buildings, IT systems, and financial/operational functions.
- Develop alternatives to closing schools, consistent with CDC’s operational guidance for maintaining school operations.
- Develop educational continuity plans (virtual learning, take-home packets, remote enrichment).
- Plan for full or partial district closure.
- Develop mental health response plans for students and staff, including trauma-informed supports and post-event counseling—consistent with CDC recommendations for maintaining well-being during outbreaks.
- Apply all plans and procedures to after-school programs.

LEVEL 1: SUSPECTED HUMAN-TO-HUMAN OUTBREAK

- CDC recommends reviewing infectious-disease emergency plans during suspected outbreaks and maintaining communication with local public health partners.
- Review preparedness plans and communicate roles and responsibilities with key staff.
- Maintain enhanced infection-control precautions (hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning routines).
- Keep staff and parents updated through the district website and communication platforms.
- Ensure staff and external contact information is up to date, especially direct lines to the local public health department.
- Inform principals of outbreak status and the potential for rapid escalation.
- Follow CDC guidance regarding immunization records and enrollment during disease outbreaks.
- Place Incident Command Center staff on standby.
- Inform community agencies to assist families with potential access barriers (food insecurity, language services).
- Apply procedures to after-school programs.

LEVEL 2: CONFIRMED HUMAN-TO-HUMAN OUTBREAK

CDC recommends expanded monitoring and active communication with school communities during confirmed outbreaks.

- Continue communication with key staff regarding responsibilities.
- Maintain infection-control precautions.
- Alert principals of Event Level 2 status.
- Monitor student and staff attendance daily; report unusual absenteeism patterns to public health.
- Enforce immunization requirements per local and federal health guidelines.
- Maintain direct communication with the local health department.
- Provide updates through multiple communication channels (email, newsletters, social media).
- Reinforce hand hygiene and illness-prevention messaging.
- Review out-of-state travel plans and be prepared to cancel field trips.

LEVEL 3: WIDESPREAD HUMAN OUTBREAK

At this level, CDC recommends intensified operations, active coordination with public health authorities, and enhanced infection-prevention measures.

- Activate the Incident Command Center with 24/7 staffing capability.
- Initiate direct daily communication with the local health department and state agencies
- Notify principals of escalation to Level 3.
- Monitor attendance and report findings to health authorities.
- Alert central office staff that closure or activity cancellation may occur.
- Do not enroll new students without appropriate immunization documentation.
- Sanitize schools and buses daily using CDC-aligned cleaning procedures.
- Isolate symptomatic students or staff until they can safely depart.
- Pre-stage Crisis Response Teams for mental health and crisis communication.
- Apply all procedures to after-school programs.

LEVEL 4: EXPANDED HUMAN OUTBREAK

CDC guidance recommends expanding communication, mental-health resources, and strict illness-control practices at this stage.

- Fully activate the Incident Command Center and maintain public health connections.
- Alert secondary command-center staff.
- Activate an information hotline or social media response center, update at least daily.
- Activate Crisis Response Team(s) for mental health support.
- Report attendance to health officials twice daily.
- Enforce immunization requirements for new students.
- Prepare alternatives to closure.
- Isolate symptomatic individuals and arrange transportation if necessary.
- Adjust cleaning routines following CDC sanitation guidance.
- Apply procedures to after-school programs.

LEVEL 5: EXPANDED (LOCAL) OUTBREAK

CDC guidance calls for close coordination with health authorities, possible closure considerations, and community assistance structures.

- Maintain daily communication with public health agencies.
- Prepare directives from public health and/or GaDOE.
- Implement partial or full school closures if directed by health officials.
- Cancel all field trips, extracurricular activities, and events.
- Activate educational continuity plans.
- Enforce immunization requirements.
- Expand hotline staffing and increase frequency of updates.
- Isolate symptomatic individuals in supervised, limited-access rooms.
- Require real-time reporting of absences.
- Limit access to the building and implement social-distancing strategies recommended by CDC.
- Increase cleaning routines and apply all procedures to after-school programs.



LEVEL 6: HEALTH EMERGENCY

This level reflects CDC's guidance for significant operational response during major outbreaks or declared public health emergencies.

- Implement partial or full school closures as directed by public health authorities or the governor.
- Communicate widely using all available channels and coordinate messaging with public health.
- Secure all buildings and ensure law enforcement patrols as needed.
- Dispose of perishable foods unless the cafeteria remains operational.
- Check alarm and surveillance systems.
- Secure all vehicles.
- Maintain communication with public health authorities.
- Collaborate with community agencies to support families.
- Activate educational continuity plans.

LEVEL 7: RECOVERY—REOPENING SCHOOLS

CDC emphasizes careful reopening based on public health authorization, facility readiness checks, and recovery support for student and staff well-being.

- Begin reopening preparations only after public health clearance.
- Activate mental health plans, including post-event counseling for trauma or stress.
- Inspect buildings, equipment, materials, and identify operational needs.
- Inspect transportation systems.
- Evaluate IT systems and operational capacity.
- Inspect cafeterias and other facilities with local health department support.
- Expand cleaning routines in preparation for staff and students.
- Establish timelines and staffing levels necessary for reopening.
- Reactivate hotlines and social media.
- Revise the school year calendar and distribute it widely.
- Enforce immunization requirements for new enrollees.



TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The State of Georgia Guide for School Safety Plans defines several terms that school personnel are likely to use in their School Safety Plans. This section compiles all terms and definitions provided throughout this guide.

1. **Accident**: An accident is an abnormal condition, disorder, or event that could result in an injury to students or school personnel.
2. **Active Attacks**: An active attack involves weaponry, explosives, and active shooter events. They can also include vehicle attacks, knife attacks, and any other events in which the primary concern is an attempt at mass murder.
3. **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**: An AED is a medical device designed to analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock to victims of ventricular fibrillation to restore the heart rhythm to normal. Ventricular fibrillation is the uncoordinated heart rhythm most often responsible for sudden cardiac arrest.
4. **Barricade**: A barricade is a designated perimeter established for the purpose of seizing or holding security for the fulfillment of a condition.
5. **Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM)**: A fact-based systematic process that identifies subjects and situations of concern, inquiries about information, assesses a situation, and manages a situation or mitigates harm.
6. **Biological Threat**: Biological threats may involve an infectious disease with the potential to spread and cause an outbreak. Infectious diseases are illnesses caused by germs (such as bacteria and viruses).
7. **Bomb**: A bomb or explosive device creates an explosion associated with an extremely vigorous outward release of energy, usually with the generation of high temperatures and the release of high-pressure gases.
8. **Bomb Threat**: A bomb threat is defined as a threat to detonate an explosive or incendiary device to cause property damage, death, or injuries, regardless of whether such a device exists.
9. **Crisis**: A sudden and unexpected event leading to a disruption of operations at a school or a school-sponsored event (e.g., field trip, sporting event, extracurricular activities), also considered an emergency. Crises may be natural (weather related) or manmade (e.g., cyber threats, hazardous materials exposure, active shooter).



10. **Civil Disturbances:** Examples of civil disturbances may include student walkouts, student protests, parents/community members upset over a ruling. Disturbances are categorized into the following levels:
 - a. **Level 1 Disturbance:** Disruption is confined to one area and poses no threat to students/staff.
 - b. **Level 2 Disturbance:** Disruption forces are moving in multiple locations and/or pose a threat to students/staff.
 - c. **Level 3 Disturbance:** Disruption is widespread and is a serious threat to students/staff.
11. **Cybersecurity:** The application of technologies, processes, and controls to protect systems, networks, programs, devices, and data from cyberattacks.
12. **Depressions:** Weather events that include an atmospheric low-pressure system originating in the tropics, specifically, a tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained wind speed is thirty-eight miles per hour (62 kilometers (about 38.53 mi) per hour) or less.
13. **Emergency Kits:** Boxes and containers that are easily transportable and include basic emergency items to ensure school personnel and students can deal with illness and injury. These kits contain water, breathing protection devices, emergency lights and tools, snacks, and first aid supplies.
14. **Epidemic:** An epidemic is a disease outbreak specific to one city, region, or country that typically starts and spreads rapidly.
15. **Flooding:** Involves the overflow of water onto normally dry land. Flooding is the inundation of a normally dry area caused by rising water in an existing waterway, such as a river, stream, or drainage ditch.
16. **Flash Floods:** Events that typically begin within six hours and often within three hours of heavy rainfall.
17. **Hazardous Materials:** Includes explosive, flammable, combustible, corrosive, oxidizing, toxic, infectious, or radioactive materials that are exposed on school premises.
18. **Homeland Security Coordinator (HSC):** The HSC serves local area schools by providing guidance and technical assistance on matters of emergency management and preparedness as schools develop their School Safety Plans.
19. **Hostage:** A hostage is a person seized or held as security for the fulfillment of a condition.
20. **Hurricane:** A hurricane is a large rotating storm with high-speed winds that form over warm waters in tropical areas. Hurricanes have sustained winds of at least seventy-four miles per hour, and an area of low air pressure in the center called the eye.

21. **Illness/Injury**: An illness is an abnormal condition, disorder, or event that could result in an injury to students or school personnel. Examples include cut, fracture, sprain, and/or acute and chronic illnesses, such as skin disease, respiratory disorder, or poisoning.
22. **Intruder**: An intruder is someone whose presence is uninvited and unwelcome and/or whose behavior jeopardizes the safety of the school building.
23. **Life Safety Alert**: A life safety alert is a panic alert which notifies first responders that immediate deployment of law enforcement and emergency medical services is required to the school for an emergency endangering or potentially endangering lives at school.
24. **Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT)**: Training and education developed using evidence-informed courses on topics such as suicide prevention, trauma, general mental health awareness, and educator wellness.
25. **Mobile Panic System**: A mobile panic system is a portable and wearable device or smartphone application that allows an individual to send a silent, emergency alert to designated school officials, responders, and public answering points.
26. **Pandemic**: A pandemic is a type of epidemic that has spread worldwide, affecting many countries and continents.
27. **School Mapping Data**: School mapping data must include building information, floor plans, and aerial imagery which includes the immediate vicinity as defined by the school.
28. **Student Disruptions**: Student disruptions may include student walkouts or protests.
29. **Suspicious Package**: Suspicious packages include any package causing concern as to its content because of its appearance or labeling.
30. **Suspicious Person**: A suspicious person is someone whose observed behavior may indicate pre-operational planning which jeopardizes the safety of the school building.
31. **Terrorism**: The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political, social, or ideological objectives.
32. **Threat/Occurrence of Suicide**: A threat or occurrence of suicide may involve any interpersonal action, verbal or nonverbal, with or without a direct self-injurious component, that a reasonable person would interpret as communicating or suggesting suicidal behavior may occur soon.
33. **Tornado**: A tornado is a violently rotating column of air touching the ground, usually attached to the base of a thunderstorm.



34. **Tornado Warning:** A tornado warning signals that a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar in or near the coverage area.
35. **Tornado Watch:** A tornado watch indicates that weather conditions are favorable for a tornado in and near the watch area.
36. **Tropical Storm:** A tropical storm is a circular storm that forms over warm water. When it hits land, it typically brings heavy rains and strong winds that can destroy buildings and rip trees with their roots.
37. **Unified Command:** In incidents involving multiple jurisdictions, a single jurisdiction with multiagency involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement, unified command allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

GLOSSARY OF LINKS

The State of Georgia Guide for School Safety Plans refers to several website links to assist school personnel with the development of their emergency management procedures and protocols. For easy reference, this section compiles all website links provided throughout the guide.

1. Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 School Safety Law-Section 1
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-27/section-20-2-1185/>
2. Georgia House Bill 268
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/231344>
3. Georgia House Bill 147
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/213152>
4. Georgia House Bill 1284
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20232024/224174>
5. Georgia Code O.C.G.A § 16-11-127.1. Carrying Weapons within School Safety Zones
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-16/chapter-11/article-4/part-3/section-16-11-127-1/>
6. Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 38-3-22.2. Sharing and Reporting Cyberattack
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-38/chapter-3/article-2/section-38-3-22-2/>
7. Georgia Code O.C.G.A § 31-11-55.1. Opioid Antagonists
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-31/chapter-11/article-3/section-31-11-55-1/>



8. Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779. Care for students with Diabetes
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-3/section-20-2-779/>
9. Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.1. Suicide Prevention & Awareness Training
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-3/section-20-2-779-1/>
10. Georgia Code O.C.G.A. § 20-2-590 Mobile Panic Alert System Requirements
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20252026/236446.pdf>
11. Georgia Code § 20-2-742 Multi-Tiered System of Supports Prior to Suspension or Expulsion
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-2/subpart-1a/section-20-2-742/>
12. Georgia Code § 31-11-53 AED Ventricular fibrillation
<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-31/chapter-11/article-3/section-31-11-53-1/>
13. Georgia Professional Standards Commission
<https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/SSAG/SSAG%20Overview.pdf>
14. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security School Safety
<https://gema.georgia.gov/what-we-do/school-safety>
15. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security School Safety Training
<https://gema.georgia.gov/school-safety-training>
16. GEMA/HS Training Registration System (TRS)
<https://training.gema.ga.gov/TRS/>
17. Georgia Department of Education Georgia Center for School Safety
<https://gacss.org>
18. Georgia Department of Education Georgia Learns
<https://portal.doe.k12.ga.us/GeorgiaLearn.aspx?oid=46040>
19. Ready Georgia Seal of Preparedness
https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/8d97403e-4365-4c5d-a22d-7c2ad73d5126/1/Ready%20Georgia%20Seal%20of%20Preparedness_One%20Pager.pdf
20. GaDOE Mental Health Awareness Training
<https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/50ac485b-6532-4a55-8dbe-d7dc64716341/1/MHAT%20One%20Pager%20%28w%20Overview%29.pdf>



21. Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Suicide Prevention
<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/bh-prevention/suicide-prevention>
22. School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsements
<https://www.gapsc.com/Certification/SchoolSafetyandAntiGangEndorsement.aspx>
23. U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Overdose Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/stop-overdose/caring/naloxone.html>
24. Georgia 9-8-8 Lifeline
<https://988ga.org/resources>
25. Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Apex Program
<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/georgia-apex-program>
26. Suicide Prevention Resource Center *After a Suicide Toolkit for Schools*
<sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf>
27. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Lockdown Procedures
<https://riskmanagementservices.gsba.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Lockdown-Procedures.pdf>
28. Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Bomb Threat Assessment Questionnaire
<https://riskmanagementservices.gsba.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Bomb-Threat-Assessment-Questionnaire.pdf>
29. Georgia Office of the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner
<https://oci.georgia.gov/safety-fire-reporting-education>
30. National Weather Service Preparedness Guide for School
www.weather.gov/grb/schools
31. Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Prohibited Foreign Adversary Social Media
<https://gema.georgia.gov/what-we-do/homeland-security/prohibited-fa-social-media>
32. GEMA/HS Cyber-Security Incident Reporting Portal
<https://gagema.powerappsportals.us/>
33. Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Homeland Security Coordinators
<https://gema.georgia.gov/what-we-do/school-safety>



ATTACHMENT A BOMB THREAT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____ Time: _____ Incoming phone number: _____

Ask the Caller:

1. Where is the bomb right now?
2. What will cause the bomb to explode?
3. When is the bomb going to explode?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What does the bomb look like?
6. Who placed the bomb?
7. Why was the bomb placed?
8. How do you know this information?
9. What is your name?

Exact Wording of Bomb Threat?

Caller Information	Caller's Voice			Background Sounds:		Threat Language:
Sex: _____	Calm	Nasal	Slurred	Traffic	Voices	Well Spoken
Race: _____	Soft	Angry	Whispered	Music	Static	Offensive Words
Age: _____	Stuttered	Lisp	Accent	Clear	Machinery Noises	Taped
Length of Call: _____	Excited	Loud	Disguised	Factory Noises	Long Distance	Incoherent
	Laughter	Slow	Cracking	PA System	Crowd/Others	Message Read
	Familiar: (Who did it sound like?) _____			Other Information about background: _____		Irrational

<p style="text-align: center;">Agencies Notified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 911/Law Enforcement/Fire <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent's Office <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management Agency <input type="checkbox"/> GEMAHSA School Safety Coordinator 	<p style="text-align: center;">Call Received by:</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Title/Position: _____</p>
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Additional Information: _____

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ATTACHMENT B

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

Every day, schools across the nation must place their campuses lockdown due to an unsafe environment or threat. Lockdowns can be addressed in a variety of ways, but research and best practices reveal several procedures that rise above the rest. Although these recommendations will work for most situations, it is highly recommended that school officials consult with local law enforcement to cooperatively develop protocols for all parties responding to an incident at the schools.

Important Points to Consider

- When making the announcement to place the school in a lockdown, do NOT use “codes.” State in plain speech that the school is in a Level X lockdown until further notice. If deemed necessary, it may be appropriate to provide additional instructions based on the specific situation but do NOT announce the reason for the lockdown.
- The level of lockdown may change at any time. Students and staff should be prepared to respond appropriately.

Suggested Lockdown Levels

- **Exterior Lockdown**
 - Lock all exterior doors, lock and monitor main access door.
 - Monitor movement of students, particularly between classes.
 - Movement is limited to inside the building.
 - Students and staff remain in building.
 - Block visibility into classrooms from exterior windows and doors. **Example: Threat is exterior to school. Criminal activity is area of school.*
- **Interior Lockdown**
 - Close and lock all exterior/classroom doors.
 - Open exterior window blinds or curtains to allow exterior visibility into classroom.
 - Conduct accountability procedures. Display appropriate status cards if plan requires.
 - Staff and students do not leave classroom.
 - Continue classroom introduction or normal activities within the classroom.
 - Do not contact office unless you have pertinent information or an emergency.
 - Announce for all visitors/vendors inside the building to return to the office. **Example: Threat is inside school. Angry parent or student that is verbally upset and agitated but not physically threatening at current time. Medical emergency requiring EMS response.*
- **Full Lockdown**
 - If safe to do so, lock exterior doors (primarily applicable when multiple buildings exist).
 - Immediately ensure classroom doors are locked and consider barricading interior classroom doors.
 - All persons should move out of sight in locked rooms. Turn off lights, if visibility is possible from interior windows/doors.
 - Open exterior window blinds or curtains to allow exterior visibility into classroom.
 - Remain silent, place all phones/electronic devices on silence.
 - School officials get into lockdown position also. **Example: Threat is inside. Threatening person is at school, possible weapon involved/active shooter (student/parent/staff).* Work with local law enforcement and **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND, AVOID** the threat (this may mean different actions depending on location), **DENY** the threat access to students and faculty through locked doors and barricading. **DEFEND** as an absolute last resort do not leave secured area to “hunt” the threat.

**Consult with local responding law enforcement to determine their preference based on tactical capabilities.*

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STATE OF GEORGIA
GUIDE FOR SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS



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