

CRISIS RESPONSE

In responding to a crisis situation, the school administration and staff shall implement the following procedures:

A. LEVEL I - Threat Situation

In an event of an overt threat to an individual:

1. Anyone becoming aware of such a threat shall, without delay, report the nature of this threat, and any details known about the threat to the building Principal or, his/her immediate supervisor or to the district office if either of the aforementioned are not available.
2. The administrator/supervisor, upon receipt of such a report, shall isolate and contain the individual (s) reported to have made said threat. Such action is to be taken only if it is possible to do so without further jeopardizing the safety of the individual threatened or any other individual on the school premises.
3. If the physical safety of any individual is, or might be, jeopardized the local law enforcement authorities must be contacted for their assistance.
4. Whenever possible, the building supervisor or administrator shall cause any and all other individuals present to be removed from the immediate and surrounding location to a place of safety.
5. In those instances in which weapons and/or potentially dangerous materials are discovered to be involved, the local law enforcement authorities must immediately be notified in accordance with Policy #8470 by the administration and the weapon should be secured. Efforts to disarm firearms should not be undertaken.
6. The building administrator or supervisor shall, at his/her earliest opportunity, report to the Superintendent the existence of any crisis situation, the status of that situation and any action contemplated or taken by the building administrator.
7. In the absence of an imminent threat to any individual(s) (such as those outlined in #3 or #5 above), the Superintendent may choose to consult with others in determining an appropriate response to the threat situation; e.g., Board Attorney, administrator in whose school the threat has occurred.
8. The Superintendent may
 - a) Convene a meeting of the Crisis Team and/or members of that Team for consultation regarding an appropriate course of action.
 - b) Direct the administrator to:
 - 1) Contact the parents of the individual (s) involved and require their

immediate presence at school to discuss the nature of the threat.

- 2) Immediately suspend the student (s) from school, pending further action.
 - 3) Require an assessment of the student by a mental health professional before the child may return to school.
 - 4) When applicable, place suspended student (s) on Homebound Instruction, pending evaluation by the Child Study Team.
 - 5) Report the incident to the local police authorities.
- c) In instances in which weapons have been involved, initiate suspension or expulsion proceedings in accordance with Policy #5610/5620.
9. Upon resolution of Level I situation, counseling services may be provided to individual (s) who have been adversely affected. Such services may be made available through the Guidance Department, Child Study Team or through a referral to an outside agency.
 10. An incident report must be completed by the building administrator as soon as possible after the event and submitted to the superintendent.
 11. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall report to the Board concerning the relevant details of the Level I crisis situation; specifically, those actions contemplated or taken and the resultant outcome.

B. LEVEL II - Crisis in Progress

During the commission of an act of terrorism, hostage situation or other violence, the jurisdiction of the local/State Police authority is recognized.

1. Aware that such an act is in progress, the administrator must, without delay, notify the local, state, or county law enforcement authorities.
2. The school shall place at the disposal of the law enforcement authorities, all personnel and information that might be supportive and useful in resolving the crisis.
3. The Crisis Team may be immediately convened.
4. The Crisis Team may be briefed on the status of the situation and will act in an informational and advisory capacity to the Superintendent or his/her designee and

local enforcement agency during the crisis.

5. The Crisis Team members will provide assistance and services as needed to help maintain order. Efforts should also be directed toward generating a sense of control in students, staff, and members of the community.
6. An incident report must be completed by the building administrator as soon as possible after the event and submitted to the superintendent.
7. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall act as the primary disseminator of information to the press, public, and staff concerning the ongoing crisis. No employee other than the Superintendent or designee shall provide information to the media. He/she may elect to consult with the local, state, or county law enforcement authorities and/or Crisis Team in determining the nature and the extent of information to be released. Consideration shall be given to the possible effects that the release of information may have on:
 - a) The safety of individuals immediately involved in the situation;
 - b) The reactions or interpretation of the staff, students, or community;
 - c) The effect upon law enforcement efforts to resolve the crisis.

C. LEVEL III - Aftermath

Upon resolution of a Level II situation, the Crisis Team shall convene to determine the status of the student body, staff, and community and to determine the steps needed to reestablish a normalized psychological/social environment.

1. The Crisis Team shall consider and make recommendations concerning:
 - a) Individuals who are in the need of referral to in-school counseling services;
 - b) Individuals who need to be referred to agencies or private counselors;
 - c) Steps to be taken by staff in dealing with student questions, concerns, and fears related to the crisis. To accomplish this, a staff meeting of the entire staff shall be held as soon as time and circumstances allow;
 - d) Information to be provided to the classroom teacher which may be shared with students with the objective of reducing fear, rumor, and promoting a calming and healing atmosphere;
 - e) Debriefing opportunities for staff members who have questions, concerns, and fears related to the crisis;
 - f) Directions to the staff regarding appropriate/inappropriate media contact.

2. The Crisis Team shall:
 - a) Review the crisis policy and procedures currently in effect;
 - b) Make suggestions to the Superintendent or his/her designee for modifications in policy and procedures, which have potential for dealing with future incidents.
3. The Superintendent or his/her designee, shall communicate to the Board of Education information concerning the resolution of the crisis situation, details of actions contemplated or taken and recommendations for changes in policy or procedures.
4. Individuals who are members of the student population and are found to be culpable in the commission of any threat or act as indicated above, shall be subject to:
 - a) Criminal law pertaining to such acts and individuals.
 - b) The civil law pertaining to such acts and individuals.
 - c) New Jersey Education Law and Codes (Regular and Special Education) as they pertain to such acts and individuals.

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