

Safety Review Team Report

Community Meeting Draft

This report summarizes the findings of the Safety Review Team that was set up immediately following the lockdown event that occurred on Tuesday 8 October, 2019. The district recognized that there was a need for an independent group of stakeholders that could receive comments, interpret them, and suggest recommendations. The team comprises the following members: Richard Têtu, Jim Ghiglione, Alisa Ball, Hazel Arden, Jennell Kvistad, Teri Linneman, Sergeant Scott Taylor, Karla Alcazar, and Chris Greacen, reflecting a balance of teachers, students, parents, law enforcement, and safety professionals.

This report comprises two parts. Part 1 summarizes the comments received. Part 2 is a list of recommendations that the Team presents for community consideration after more than two months of weekly meetings. The team recognizes that the financial implications of these recommendations have not yet been determined. Financial implications may affect their ultimate timing and prioritization.

Part 1: Comments Received

We received more than 100 comments. Some comments covered multiple topic areas. We've considered every comment, but where there were duplicates, we consolidated them. Of all the comments received, some expressed only concerns, others provided recommendations on how to fix the problem. Where only concerns were listed, we discussed among our team and arrived at recommendations that addressed them.

Communication

1. We need multiple clear ways to communicate with staff regarding the initiation and ending of a lockdown, and about important details about the nature of the lockdown event. (e.g. text, email, landline) (This was a frequent comment.)
2. We need multiple clear ways to communicate with all parents and students about emergencies and during active situations -- and collecting students after the event. (Also a frequent comment).
3. Robocalls should also be in Spanish
4. Community needs to be pro-actively educated on action that is appropriate during a lockdown.
5. There were concerns about students getting on the wrong bus after the lockdown.
6. Bus drivers need to be clearly informed about what is going on and told what to do.
7. Students should be allowed to use cell phones during a lockdown.

Drills/Training

8. Use secondary PACK time for students to contact and double check their emergency contacts.
9. Present a yearly training/drill calendar to the staff.
10. Invite local safety professionals (Fire Chief, Law Enforcement), to witness emergency drills.
11. It was unclear when the lockdown was over. Practice with a clear protocol to eliminate confusion.
12. There was confusion about student transportation. Try running drills in which students load on buses.
13. The bus drivers were not involved in the emergency plan or drills.
14. Concern for the high school students arriving at school after the lockdown had begun.
15. Practice some scenarios without students
16. Clarify protocol regarding use of doors between adjacent classrooms and offices.

Equipment

17. Concern that the speakers could not be heard in all areas of the school. A direct means of communication between the transportation building and the rest of the campus needs to be established.
18. The kitchen does not have a plastic emergency procedure pocket like the other classrooms.
19. Elementary should implement the red and green clipboard system that the secondary school has.
20. Police should be able to access the school if locked. Police should have access to the knox-box.
21. Staff should have ID badges so that they can be easily identified.
22. Those in charge should have vests during an emergency so they are easily identifiable.
23. The doors of connecting offices don't lock.
24. Substitute teachers should receive keys upon arrival.
25. Concern that some doors may only be locked from the outside. Library door sticks open making the library an insecure location.
26. Consider the use of security cameras.
27. Concern that the window blinds in some classrooms don't function properly.

Location

28. When necessary, the students should be evacuated to a location away from the school. Students could be dropped off at the Community Center or other location.
29. Set up an offsite reunification for kindergarten age students.

30. Concern that the OPALCO evacuation site is dangerous for kids who run uncontained because it requires that students cross the road to reach the location.

Personnel

31. Consider hiring a security guard.

Procedure

32. During emergencies, radios should only be used to convey important information.
33. Identify a Keyholder, a position that unlocks doors and gives updates.
34. Concern that parents were taking students without checking them out with the office.
35. The announcement should not say “drill” in a real lockdown situation.
36. Lockdown should be ended by intercom, not keying out.
37. The school should have a plan for student medications in the case of an emergency.
38. Confusion about cell phone policy during the lockdown.
39. How can the Maintenance Shed be notified about the lockdown?
40. Adjust the drill structure to include Incident Command System (ICS) assignments, identify who is in charge.
41. The school should designate a consequence manager.
42. There should be a regularly scheduled review of safety procedures.
43. Concern that the students were allowed to board buses with unsearched backpacks.
44. Concern that teachers left students alone after being released from the classroom.
45. A staff member was asked to lock all outside doors, putting him in a potentially dangerous location.
46. The school should have a plan for different emergency situations, e.g. threat on campus -- e.g. threat in village.
47. Traffic management in front of school, direction for parents who are looking for their kids.
48. The bus drivers should be informed about all emergency procedures and participate in emergency drills.
49. There needs to be a clear walking path from elementary building to the bus pick-up. Have someone directing teachers and their classes.
50. Unsure where the safe places were in each class room. Create room by room strategies and maps.
51. Passing a paper note is not an effective way to communicate important information.
52. Concern that not all exterior doors were locked.

Other Written Concerns

53. Parents were fighting in the parking lot.
54. Why was the original threat not brought to the Sheriff?
55. Why was the staff posting on Facebook while the school was in lockdown?
56. Is the staff trained in lockdown/emergency procedures, especially administrators?
57. Is there a process currently in place for parents picking up their children?

58. Were lockers searched after the event?
59. What are the school's lockdown policies and where can they be found?
60. Will the school bring in a community or school counselor after emergency events?
61. Why were students told by teachers that a gun was found in the garden?

Part 2: Recommendations

Based on the comments received, these are the recommendations we have made at this time.

Above all, it seems evident to the team that a permanent safety review team needs to be created with a composition that reflects safety professionals, teachers, parents and other stakeholders with responsibility to address safety matters. This does not take the place of a Safety Committee as mandated by Labor and Industries Rules.

Among the first tasks of this body should be to revise, update and harmonize the Emergency Response Plan and its user-friendly action guide, the Emergency Procedures Handbook, which is the tool used by staff, students, and the community during emergencies and drills. The team, in coordination with the District, should explore funding opportunities for these costs including grants, levies, bonds, donations, or other funding sources.

The Safety Review Team recognizes that implementing these changes will require someone on staff who ensures that actions are implemented. A safety supervisor position needs to be created and funded to review and implement recommendations approved by the board. This position should be held by a subject matter expert.

Communication

Priority: Now

1. During the lockdown, Public Address system (PA) announces -- "Initiating lockdown. Look at your email or phone text" (announced to staff). This script should be written in Emergency Procedures Handbook (EPR)
2. District should create a full call list for staff cell phone numbers (optional to participate), emergency plan includes this in checklist. Use of messengers (people bringing a paper around) in ERP should be deleted.
3. Explore collecting student cell phone numbers on an opt-in basis for emergency communications.
4. Ask for parents to respond if they got the call (on a drill) to verify call list. Parents should be requested to provide their current email address, phone number and text as ways to get notifications. Mail a form home to parents (do not send home with students), with follow-up to verify 100% compliance. Provide way to notify and solicit updated

- emergency info through Skyward as well. Maybe all forms could be filled through Google or Skyward. A reminder should be sent out to parents to update emergency information.
5. The school website should be the main form of communication from the school district. There should be only one designated public relation position, but multiple ways to modify (no single operator, but single operator at a time). Add an emergency tab on website, with drop down menus for each type of emergency (lockdown, earthquake, gas leak etc.). In parent packet, parents should be reminded that in emergency situations, students will only be left at their regular bus stop, at a designated reunification center, or returned to school, according to the situation.
 6. Post the communication protocols on the school website and a hard copy in the yearly school packet.
 7. In the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), one person should be assigned to do traffic direction, with appropriate identification (i.e., vest) and communication device. Block entrances with cones and a sandwich board telling parents where reunification takes place. School district needs to meet with Lopez Fire Chief to discuss how to liaise with the department for emergency situations.
 8. Teachers should not directly communicate with parents. Lockdown protocol should be followed.
 9. Staff should research the roll out of getting text alerts out to staff members since some staff members go to off site locations during the day (i.e., preschool, post office) or may be on the playground
 10. Do not implement code words in communicating directions to staff.
 11. The transportation team needs full information. (i.e., What is the problem? What is the plan?) The transportation director will create a checklist of what needs to be communicated when the Incident Commander (IC) requests evacuation transportation.
 12. Add transportation staff into emergency response procedures and drills. Teachers and students need to know where to go to load on the buses, or where to go if not boarding a bus. Kids need to be checked off as they leave. Driver designates primary and alternative location.
 13. Create FAQ for website to explain rationales for procedures
 14. Per ERP, announcement of a lockdown should not reference that it is a drill if it is a real event, and drills should be announced and concluded as drills.
 15. Students should not use cell phones during lockdowns except under staff directions. Procedures should be modified on staff emergency sheets. Students could be allowed to communicate under strict direction, using scripts dictated by supervising staff. Script might be something like, "This is Johnny. I'm at the school and OK. Contact the school's website for more info."
 16. Robo calls should also be in Spanish if not common practice already. Language of choice should be selected in parent packet filled out at the beginning of the year.
 17. Follow procedure from Emergency Procedure Handbook. Review best practices. Review conflicts between Emergency Procedures Handbook and the Emergency Response Plan. Make EPH available in a digital version.

Priority: 2 months

18. Have clear plans for parents on the school's website and in the Student Handbook. Make reference to these plans in a robo call that includes the directions: "Check the website or your Student Handbook for the protocol."
19. Per ERP, all communications should proceed from single Information Officer. Regular communications are needed. Multiple designees can fill the role, but a single person is the Information Officer.

Priority: 6 months

20. Consider researching a system for tracking students getting to appropriate place on the bus (home) that parents and drivers can use. There are GPS systems that can have students swipe a card as they board a bus and their location is tracked real time only when they are on the bus (tracking stops when they step off the bus). Costs about \$900 per bus. <https://www.zonarsystems.com/solutions/z-pass-student-tracking/>

Drills/Training

Priority: 2 months

21. Emergency numbers need to be confirmed for staff, students and parents. This can be done by having secondary students call the number on file during PACK or some other common period.
22. Test texting to students and guardians' cell phone numbers. "E.g. There is a lockdown in process. If you are in the building, follow directions. If you are off campus, stay away."

Priority: 6 months

23. A training schedule needs to be established, reviewed, and updated. This training would apply in whole or in part to all staff members, and take into account new personnel.

Equipment

Priority: Now

24. Doors should be lockable from inside without a key. This should be completed by January 2020.
25. Verify that all window blinds function.

Priority: 2 months

- 26. Transportation Office needs to have landline or other reliable means of communication with District Office
- 27. Provide access to Knox boxes to law enforcement.
- 28. Install a door fenestration obscuring system.

Priority: 6 months

- 29. Consideration should be given to keyless remote system because it would allow to lock exterior doors instantly, allow access by emergency personnel without a Knox box, allow supervision of entry at all times, and reduce costs of rekeying.
- 30. Build a response kit per ERP (e.g. identification vest, scripts, etc.)
- 31. Consider installing safety cameras within buildings and outside.
- 32. Provide all staff members with identification badges, and ensure that a permanent system is in place.

Location

Priority: Within 2 months

- 33. For full evacuation, such as lockdown, two locations needs to be selected and contracted. LCCA and tennis courts are probables.
- 34. Whenever Kindergartners leave school outside of normal times, a location needs to be selected and contracted. Discuss with Children Center and LIFRC.
- 35. Temporary relocation area needs to be tennis courts, not Opalco, for safety reasons (i.e. traffic, line of sight, etc.). Parking lot and fences make for better crowd control.

Personnel

Priority: Within 6 months

- 36. Consider hiring a security guard (such as a retired police officer) in times of heightened need for security such as a when a threat is under investigation. Benefits do not warrant full-time position, especially if cameras are installed.

Procedural

Priority: Now

- 37. Trainings should be comprehensive and realistic: train with all required means of communication at all drills. ("You train the way you play")
- 38. Trainings should be on a regular basis and include all appropriate staff.

39. Per Emergency Response Plan, Keyholder will open doors. In the long term, law enforcement officers should have access to Knox Box.
40. Parents who wish to take students out of school during the regular school day should follow school procedures to help the school account for students during emergencies.
41. Procedures for students with special transportation needs should be added to ERP & EPH.
42. Emergency procedures should include traffic plans for parents, buses, and pedestrians,.
43. Per ERP, announcement of a lockdown should not reference that it is a drill if it is a real event, and drills should be announced and concluded as drills.
44. Per ERP, lockdown conclusion should be announced and staff should wait for doors to be unlocked.

Priority: Within 2 months

45. Procedures need to be developed by the school nurse for medications, with discussion with pharmacists. ERP should reflect this recommendation.
46. ERP, and therefore EPH, need to be modified to reflect modes of alert for maintenance crew, bus drivers, Decatur School, Lopez Academy, and Spring Street. Robocall may be the means for some of those alerts.
47. Drill plan needs to be created, tested, reviewed, and adjusted. This should be completed between the end of the school year and the beginning of the new school year. ERP should reflect this recommendation.
48. Per Labor and Industries Department rules, a Safety Committee needs to be formed.
49. The permanent Safety Review Team should act as a Consequence Manager to review drills and incidents, identify “sustains and improves” and whether the ERP was followed.

Priority: Within 6 months

50. Following ERP, all positions within the chain of command should be based on procedures (with checklists), not personalities. This will ensure that all required roles are staffed regardless of personnel changes.
51. ERP and EPH should reference that in case of evacuation for lockdown, students and staff should leave all personal items behind.
52. Develop and follow a policy for checking out/in for staff and students during the regular school day, with procedures developed in the ERP for emergency situations.
53. For lower level lockdowns, as requested by law enforcement (e.g. situation off campus), designated staff will lock exterior doors. For higher level lockdowns, the District should research feasibility of remote locking. If remote locking is not acquired, procedure needs to be developed. All these items should be referenced in EPR.
54. ERP and EPH need to be reviewed annually during the summer and adapted for different situations. This includes but is not restricted to assignment lists, campus plans, scripts for communication, etc.
55. Develop specific room by room plans and strategies. This should be referenced in the EPR and EPH.