The Big Five

Facilities Report



SAN MATEO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Background

The Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities is a collaborative, multi-agency group that includes representatives from across San Mateo County in education, law enforcement, fire, public safety, behavioral health, child welfare, probation, county counsel, local government, and other youth-serving organizations in San Mateo County.

The Coalition's mission is to identify and address the safety needs of San Mateo County youth by developing and implementing best practices in emergency preparedness, youth mental health, and crisis response, supported by a legally sound information sharing framework.

This report on safe schools through sound facilities management complements the Coalition's anchor document, *The Big Five*, a countywide school emergency response guide for the 23 public PreK-12 school districts, charter schools, the community college district, private schools, preschools, and child care centers in San Mateo County.

This report was produced by the Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities Steering Committee, a representative leadership body that meets monthly, provides ongoing review of all coalition safety documents, analyzes specific local challenges, and makes recommendations for best practices.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the following Coalition for Safe Schools and Communities members for their work preparing this report:

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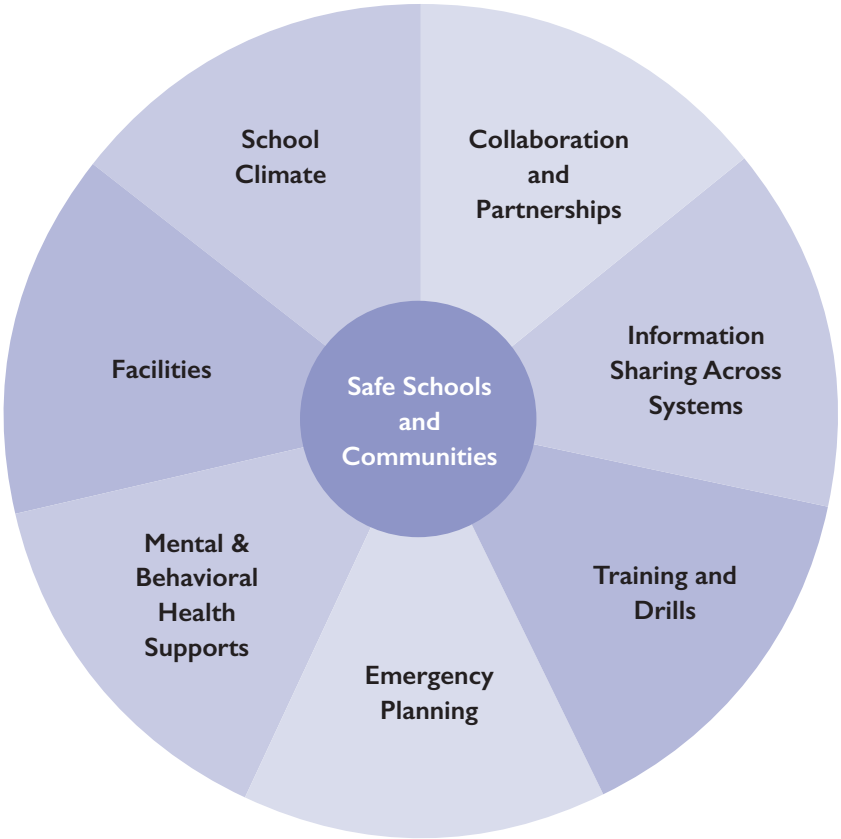
Introduction

The following recommendations for safe school facilities are grounded in the Coalition's belief that the most effective way to truly create and sustain a safe and supportive school campus is to adopt a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach to safety. Secure facilities are only a small portion of that equation; too narrow a focus on facilities can actually create a false sense of security.

Schools must prioritize positive school climate; establish clear protocols; regularly train staff, students, and community members; maintain an active school safety committee; conduct regular emergency drills; develop strong partnerships with local public safety agencies; and conduct yearly hazard assessments that result in ongoing maintenance and building improvements.

> "We cannot and should not turn our schools into fortresses. We need resources such as mental health supports and threat assessment teams in every school and community … [and] increased access to well-integrated service structures across mental health, law enforcement, and related agencies."
>
> —*Connecticut School Shooting Task Force Position Statement*
> *December 2012*

Comprehensive School Safety



A Comprehensive Approach to Facilities Safety and Management

Every person on the school campus as well as every district office employee has a responsibility in these facilities safety guidelines. A comprehensive approach to facilities safety and management includes:

- A School Safety Team that meets quarterly, at a minimum, and outlines short-term and long-term goals for safe facilities.
- Hazard Mitigation/School Safety Checklist (see appendix) performed annually in support of site goals for safe facilities.
- Annual and ongoing Big Five training for all school staff, both permanent and itinerant.
- A strong relationship with key public safety stakeholders – fire, law enforcement and public works.
- Implementation of regular drills with time to debrief with both students and staff.
- Strong support for "If you See Something, Say Something," empowering all community members who see suspicious activity to report it immediately.
- Active training and education for parents, guardians, and community members.

Ongoing and Relevant Training

Staff participation in ongoing training is essential. Important aspects of staff professional development on school safety include the following:

- The School Safety team and school administration take a lead role in training all permanent and itinerant staff on The Big Five protocols.
- District leads, facilities lead, and school administration work together to train all custodians on facilities management in emergency situations – including but not limited to: location and function of all utility shut-offs, HVAC system controls, perimeter access point management, and how to lock doors and which doors to lock in the case of an emergency.
- School leaders should identify a **three deep** list of school personnel who know how to carry out the functions listed above.
- Training for all staff, including yard duty staff and school partners, on how to approach visitors and ask appropriate questions.
- Training on Coalition protocols for *Student Threat Assessment*, *Suicide Prevention*, *Child Sexual Abuse*, and *Commercially Sexually Exploited Children* (CSEC) *and Human Trafficking*.

- Parent education and training on the school's communication systems and family reunification process in the case of a school emergency.

Communications

Managing communication effectively during an emergency situation is critical to successful outcomes. Creating layers of redundancy with various communication tools is an effective strategy. Schools should be equipped with the following:

- School-wide announcement system with clear audio that reaches all rooms and areas of the campus, including outlying fields and joint occupancy user space.
- Mass notification system that broadcasts information rapidly, to alert all key stakeholders of the school's emergency and provides the ability to update and give clear direction.
- Various types of communication devices for schools that include: walkie-talkies, school-wide announcement systems, website, mobile applications, mass notifications and alerts, email, social media, and video.

School Facilities and Security

While training and drills are critical to a comprehensive school safety program, the following measures specific to building and site security are important as well:

VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Have a clear visitor management policy securely in place and ensure all personnel know the policy.

- All visitors must sign in with front office staff and wear visible identification. School staff is trained on how to approach visitors who are not wearing identification to determine their purpose on campus.
- Several digital visitor management systems are available, capable of screening visitors using a school issued ID. Some systems can then search against databases (banned visitors, sex offenders, etc) for any concerns. If the visitor passes the system's screening, it will print a visitor badge for use during the school visit.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

School safety and security is a much broader issue than simply controlling a single intruder with a weapon. Environmental design plays a significant role, as the design of a school heavily impacts both student safety and student learning.

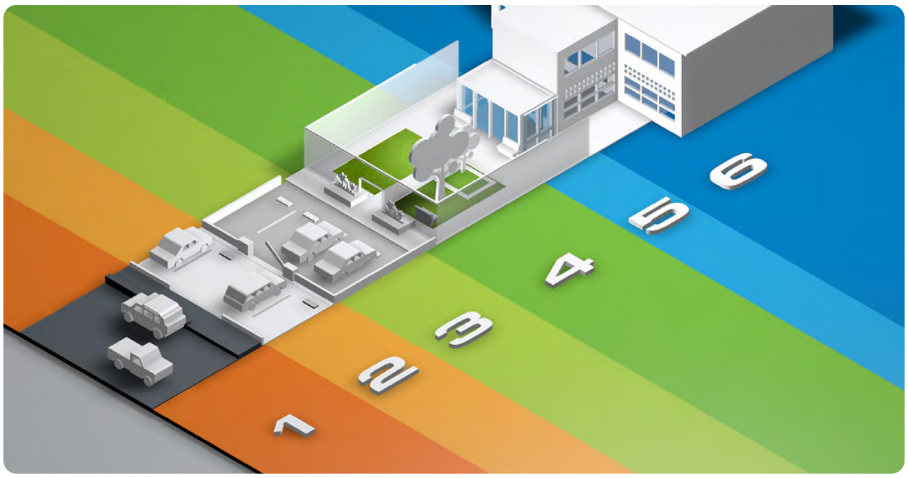
- Site administrators, facility supervisors, and Chief Business Officers should

conduct periodic walk-throughs using a Hazard Mitigation/School Safety checklist (see appendix).

- Chief Business Officer must be involved in walk-throughs and prioritizing facility needs.
- School grounds and sidewalks should be properly maintained – trees trimmed so adults and students are visible through a line of sight.
- Strategic landscaping is in place that deters persons from coming near the windows.
- Restrict the visitors' entrance. Schools should have a single entry point that requires visitors to present identification with the front office.
- Effective signage can also steer visitors' travel path.

LAYERS OF SECURITY

Layout and zoning of campus spaces also enhance student safety when designed to include barriers to hinder an intruder from advancing through the campus towards the classrooms. Below are the six layers of security that can possibly help deter, detect, or delay a violent intruder.



Layer 1 – Public Street and Curb – public space where schools keep shrubbery trimmed and create high visibility such as see-through fencing.

Layer 2 – Public Parking and Visitor Parking – use signage to distinguish parking areas, maintain line of sight, and reduce hiding opportunities.

Layer 3 – Restricted Staff and Student Parking – access only for those with a visible parking sticker. Signage and gates should ensure proper usage of this area. Reserved parking for principal, office staff, school resource officers, etc.

Layer 4 – Enclosed School Grounds and Sidewalk – largely open space with properly maintained landscaping permitting clear visibility for students and staff within the building. It provides additional space between public space and the school community.

Layer 5 – Restricted Visitor Entrance – a single point of entry for all school visitors. Visitors should be required to present identification, sign in and wear a school badge before entering the interior area of the school. Upon leaving the school, visitors will sign out and return the school badge.

Layer 6 – Restricted School Interior – once inside the building and cleared by the restricted entrance, visitors are free to move about the school. Clear signage on buildings and rooms prevents visitors from wandering hallways. Some schools write the visitor's destination on the staff badge to clearly communicate the visitor's purpose in the building.

FENCING

Fencing cannot be the sole response to school security. Little evidence exists that access control, like fencing, creates either actual or perceived safety in schools. Additionally, access control measures can easily be bypassed by those who are determined to carry out a violent act at school. The best ally that a school has in a security situation is time. Fencing can delay potential intruders, but it is insufficient as the only method for thwarting threats.

- Fences can add a layer of security to the perimeter of a school campus.
- Need for a fence will be determined on a school-by-school basis.
- Fencing controls the flow of people on and off a campus (access control) and can funnel people to the main office for visitor check in.
- Fencing may restrict access to the facility after hours, which can reduce vandalism and crime such as broken bottles, trash, and graffiti.

SIGNAGE

- Classroom and building identifiers must be large enough for First Responders to see.
- Classroom numbers should also be clearly displayed **inside the classroom** so teachers can communicate the room number to First Responders in an emergency.
- Paint signage on the roof to designate building, wing, and room numbers, if cost permits.
- Consider exterior digital signboards to display specific safety information, (e.g., "School in Secure Campus" or "All parents report to the Reunification area in the Multi-Use Room"). Some schools are connecting the school's digital signboard to a mass notification/electronic messaging system.

CLOSED CIRCUIT VIDEO / CAMERAS

A camera system at the school may be used to check in and monitor visitors, track intruders and provide essential information in evolving emergency situations. It can also be used as a forensic/evidence collection tool and as a deterrent to after-hour vandalism or crime. To enhance safety, work in partnership with local law enforcement and emergency personnel to create legal systems for sharing video footage in the case of an emergency.

LOCKS

- All facility doors should be equipped with locks that can be secured from inside the room. In addition, locks should have the ability to be opened with a key from the outside.
- Installation and maintenance of lock sets will vary based on the size of facility and type of system installed.
- To ensure lock operability, conduct regular maintenance. Schools should coordinate with the district facilities director to implement a proper maintenance plan.
- Schools can purchase simple devices that can be used to secure multiple types of doors without a key. Training on the use of these devices is essential. Consider First Responders' access and fire code compliance with any purchase.

EFFICIENT KEY MANAGEMENT

- All faculty and staff, including itinerant teachers and substitutes, should have the appropriate keys, remotes or codes to secure doors.
- Occupants should be trained through drills and exercises in how to secure a room using the installed locking mechanism.
- School authorities should have a strategic system for managing keys and supplying a set of keys to law enforcement for emergencies. In the event of life-threatening emergencies with no key access, First Responders will enter rooms by any means possible.

SCHOOL MAPPING

- Schools should work with law enforcement and fire departments to determine the best way of representing the school in a map format.
- Maps should contain surrounding physical structures such as commercial buildings, neighborhoods, community centers, health care facilities, roadways,

walkways etc., and natural resources such as open spaces, gathering spots, trails, and wetlands.

- Maps should also contain important information such as utility shut-offs, paths of travel, room titles and building numbers, plus ingress and egress access points.
- Hard copy sets of maps should be available to First Responders and extra copies should be kept in the Emergency Response Box at each school, and for use in case of power outage (see Big Five Administrators Packet).
- A School Community Asset Map can range from simple and low-cost efforts using interview techniques and paper maps, to technology-enhanced programs that use global positioning software, cameras, and interactive mapping to help gather and record sustainability resources and activities.
- A resource (PlanREADY) for technology-based mapping can be found on the SMCOE website.

OUTSIDE VENDORS

- Review all vendors, especially those offering free services, before signing a contract.
- Ensure the vendor's products can fully support The Big Five protocols.
- Focus on those with whom you are familiar, have existing relationships, or that come recommended by neighboring districts or county offices.

Air Quality Management

UNHEALTHY AIR QUALITY

Although wildfires might not directly impact a community, their smoke can cause serious health consequences for sensitive populations, including children. Schools can take several steps to prepare their facilities and communities for smoke-filled days.

INDOOR AIR MANAGEMENT

Schools can take a few steps before a smoke event occurs to help ensure that the air quality inside is much safer than the air outside.

- If possible, replace central air handler filter with medium- or high-efficiency particle filter. Filters need to be replaced regularly, and should fit the filter slot snugly. Have additional filters on hand.
- In addition, explore whether electrostatic precipitators (ESPs) can be added to the central air conditioning system to keep particle levels within acceptable levels during a prolonged smoke event.
- Consider adding high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter air cleaners, which can further reduce indoor particle levels if they are properly matched to the size of the indoor environment.
- Do not use portable air cleaners or purifiers that generate excess ozone as they may do more harm than good.
- Consider having approved N95 respirators (face masks) on hand for employees who voluntarily choose to use them. Notify staff that the mask will not provide complete protection and does not protect against gases or vapors.
- Although smaller-sized masks may appear to fit a child's face, they are not recommended for use on children.

DURING A SMOKE EVENT

If a smoke event occurs, schools should stay informed as conditions can change throughout the day and take steps to minimize the risk to both students and staff.

- Continue to monitor the EPS's AirNow website (www.airnow.gov), which reports air quality using the Air Quality Index (AQI). The AQI tells the public how clean or polluted the air is using standard descriptors.
- Stay indoors. However, the usefulness of this strategy depends on how well the building limits smoke from coming in from outdoors.

- If the filter was upgraded, set the central system's circulating fan to operate continuously (set to "ON" rather than "AUTO") to obtain maximum particle removal by the central air handler filter.
- In general, buildings should be operated at slight positive pressure in order to keep contaminants out and to help exhaust air systems function properly.
- Respirators (masks) should only be used after first implementing other, more effective methods of exposure reduction, including staying indoors, reducing activity, and using HEPA air cleaners indoors to reduce overall smoke exposure.
- Refer to the *School Air Quality Activity Recommendations* for guidelines about when and how to modify outdoor physical activity based on the AQI.
- When air quality improves, even temporarily, "air out" buildings to reduce indoor air pollution.
- Damp mop, dust, and clean with a high efficiency particulate air [HEPA] filter-equipped vacuum.

Sources

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Layers of Security
Safe and Sound Schools, 2016.

Recommendations for School Infrastructure Resilience
Rockefeller Foundation, 2018.

The Popular Mechanics Guide to Safer Schools
Popular Mechanics, 2018.

Wildfire Smoke: A Guide for Public Health Officials
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and California Air Resources Board, 2016.

Appendix

HAZARD MITIGATION/
SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

Prevention and Mitigation

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS: Use the following checklist to review the school's strengths and areas to target for improvement related to hazard mitigation and school safety procedures and policies.

If an element is:

- In place, check **YES**
- In place, but at a minimal level check **IMPROVE**
- Missing, check **NO**
- Missing, but there exists a plan to implement check **IMPLEMENT**

SCHOOL EXTERIOR AND STUDENT AREAS

School Exterior and Student Areas	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
School grounds are fenced. If yes, approximate height:				
Gates are secured and locked after hours.				
Drug-free zone signs are posted.				
Signs are posted for visitors to report to main office through a designated entrance.				
Shrubs and foliage are trimmed to allow for good line of sight.				
Bus loading and drop-off zones are clearly defined.				
Other vehicles are restricted from entering bus loading area during loading/unloading.				
Parent drop-off and pick-up area is clearly defined.				
There is adequate lighting around the building.				
Lighting is provided at entrances and other points of possible intrusion.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

SCHOOL EXTERIOR AND PLAY AREAS

School Exterior and Play Areas	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
The school is free of graffiti.				
Play areas are fenced or student boundaries are clearly marked and enforced.				
Good visual surveillance of play equipment or student congregation area is possible.				
Vehicular access to student play or congregation area is restricted.				
Playground equipment has tamper-proof fasteners.				
Visual surveillance of bicycle racks is possible.				
All areas of school buildings and grounds are accessible to patrolling security vehicles.				
Ground floor windows: -No broken panes -Locking hardware in working order				
Classroom doors are locked when classrooms are vacant.				
There is a central alarm system specific in the school.				
High-risk areas are protected by security locks and alarm system.				
There is two-way communication between classrooms and main office.				
Staff members wear I.D. badges.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

SCHOOL EXTERIOR AND PLAY AREAS

School Exterior and Play Areas	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Law enforcement monitors school grounds after school hours.				
All school equipment is marked with an identification number.				
There is a policy for handling cash received at the school.				
There is regular maintenance and/or testing of the entire security alarm system at least once every six months.				
There is a schedule for maintenance checks on lights, locks and lock hardware, and storage sheds and outbuildings.				
There is a control system in place to monitor keys and duplicates.				
Exterior light fixtures are securely mounted.				
Mechanical rooms and hazardous storage areas are locked.				
Evacuation and other emergency drills are conducted on a consistent and ongoing basis.				
A record of health permits is maintained.				
A record of fire inspection by the official Fire Marshal is maintained.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

SCHOOL INTERIOR

School Interior	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Multiple entries to the building are controlled and supervised.				
Visitors are required to sign in.				
Visitors are required to wear a visitor badge.				
The hallways are properly lighted for safety.				
Bathrooms are properly lighted.				
Staff supervises bathrooms.				
The bathroom walls are free of graffiti.				
Exit signs are clearly visible and pointing in the correct direction.				
Access to electrical panels is restricted.				
Mechanical rooms and other hazardous storage areas are kept locked.				
Confidential files and records are maintained in locked, vandal proof, and fireproof areas.				
If a classroom is vacant, students are restricted from entering the room alone.				
Faculty members are required to lock classrooms upon leaving.				
Students are restricted from loitering in corridors, hallways, and restrooms.				

Prevention and Mitigation

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

SCHOOL INTERIOR

School Interior	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Friends, relatives, or non-custodial parents are required to have written permission to pick up a student from school.				
Students are required to have permission to leave school during school hours.				
There are written regulations regarding school personnel using building facilities after school hours.				
There are regulations regarding access and control of outside groups using the building after school hours.				
Law enforcement monitors school facilities after school hours.				

DEVELOPMENT AND ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Development and Enforcement of Policies	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
The Student Behavior Code is reviewed and updated annually.				
A visitor policy is in effect, requiring a sign-in procedure for all visitors, including visible identification.				
The school has an effective Emergency Management Plan that is reviewed and updated annually.				
The Emergency Management Plan includes a specific set of procedures for students/staff with special needs.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

DEVELOPMENT AND ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Development and Enforcement of Policies	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
A chain-of-command has been established for the school when the principal and/or other administrators are away from the building.				
Behavioral expectations and consequences for violations are clearly outlined in the Behavior Code, including sanctions for weapon and drug offenses and all other criminal acts.				
Disciplinary consequences for infractions to the Behavior Code are fairly and consistently enforced.				
Parents are an integral part of student discipline procedures and actions.				
Alternatives to suspensions and expulsions are built into the discipline policy and are consistently used. (Positive Behavior Supports)				
The behavior policy provides a system whereby staff and students may report problems or incidents anonymously.				
The behavior policy includes a team-oriented, systematic threat inquiry process that all staff members, students, and parents are aware of and understand.				

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Procedures for Data Collection	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Violations of state and federal laws are reported to law enforcement.				
An incident reporting procedure for disruptive incidents is established and utilized.				

Prevention and Mitigation

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Procedures for Data Collection	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Data collection procedures are established and utilized by administrators and staff.				
Collected data is reviewed and analyzed to identify recurring problems and guide reform initiatives.				
Accident reports are filed when a student is injured on school property or during school-related activities.				
The incident reporting system is reviewed and updated annually.				

INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PLANS

Intervention and Prevention Plans	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Students have access to conflict resolution programs.				
Students are assisted in developing anger management skills.				
Diversity awareness is taught and emphasized.				
Programs are available for students who are academically at-risk. (Academic Intervention and Supports)				
Students may seek help without the loss of confidentiality.				
Students and parents have access to community resources.				

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff Development	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
The principal and other administrators maintain a highly visible profile.				
Administrators and staff (including campus security and law enforcement) are trained in The Big Five and other Coalition protocols.				
Campus Security (e.g., specifically assigned staff, law enforcement, parent volunteers) receive training relevant to their campus responsibilities.				
School Resource Officers receive training relevant to their campus responsibilities.				
The entire staff participates in emergency training that is progressive and aimed at continually increasing the level of emergency readiness on site.				
School Resource Officers offer staff training in emergency readiness.				
Teachers and staff are made aware of their legal responsibilities for the enforcement of safety rules, policies, and state and federal laws.				
School safety and violence prevention information is regularly provided as part of a school or system-wide staff development plan.				
Staff development opportunities extend to support staff including cafeteria workers, custodial staff, secretarial staff, and bus drivers.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Opportunity for Student Involvement	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Students are represented on the School Site Safety Committee.				
The school provides opportunities for student leadership related to violence prevention and safety issues.				
The school provides adequate recognition opportunities for all students.				
Students are provided encouragement and support in establishing clubs and programs to raise the level of student involvement.				
Students are adequately instructed in their responsibility to avoid becoming victims of violence (e.g., avoiding high-risk situations and behavior).				

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Parent and Community Involvement	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Parents and community members are an integral part of the school's safety planning and policymaking.				
Parents are aware of behavioral expectations and are informed of changes in a timely manner.				
Parents and community members have easy access to clear and explicit information regarding emergency procedures on campus.				
Parents and community members receive training regarding issues in emergency response at school via after-hours seminars and/or workshops.				

HAZARD MITIGATION / SCHOOL SAFETY CHECKLIST

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Parent and Community Involvement	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
The school's communication plan includes an efficient method of informing parents when an emergency situation arises.				
The school's Emergency Management Plan includes a Memorandum of Understanding with at least one community partner regarding provision of a safe and reasonable off-campus evacuation location.				

THE ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Role of Law Enforcement	Yes	Improve	No	Implement
Incidents of crime that occur on school property or at school-related events are reported to law enforcement.				
Law enforcement personnel are an integral part of the school's safety process.				
The school and its law enforcement partners have a Memorandum of Understanding, defining the roles and responsibilities of both parties.				
School security officials and local law enforcement provide a visible presence on campus during school hours and at school-related events.				
There is a communication tool in place to keep law enforcement informed regarding the schedule of non-traditional school hours.				
School administrators have the opportunity to meet with law enforcement commanders at least once a year.				