The Big Five

Student Release Guidance for Schools

TOOLKIT

Coalition for Safe Schools & Communities

SAN MATEO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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STUDENT RELEASE GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS PLANNING, PREPARATION, AND TRAINING CHECKLIST

PLANNING

- ☐ Determine location and alternate location of the Incident Command post
- ☐ Designate event Areas: Student Assembly, Family Check-In, Family Waiting Area, Family
- ☐ Assistance Area, and Family Reunification (Check-Out) Area
- ☐ Complete the Student Release/Reunification Planning Guide (Toolkit: pg.2)
- ☐ Optional: Utilize the Student Release/Reunification Preparation Action Plan (Toolkit: pg. 1)

PREPARATION

- ☐ Create Site Flow Map. Indicate staging areas, ingress, egress, and parking
- ☐ Prepare signage
- ☐ Prepare supplies (General, Wellness Box, and Traffic Control)
- ☐ Plan drill

TRAINING

- ☐ **Staff, Substitute, and After School Program Staff Training**
  - ☐ Process and Procedures (Nuts and Bolts)
  - ☐ Roles and Responsibilities
  - ☐ Supervision of Students and Professional Responsibilities
  - ☐ Communication (process, radio, etc.)
  - ☐ Trauma-Informed Approach
  - ☐ Student and Staff Wellness
  - ☐ Before, During, and After the Event
  - ☐ Leveled Drills
- ☐ **Student Training**
  - ☐ What to know: Expectations
  - ☐ What will happen: Procedures
  - ☐ What to expect: Safety, Predictability, Care
  - ☐ Parent Presentation
  - ☐ Process and Procedures
  - ☐ Valid Forms of ID; Process of verification of ID
  - ☐ Authorized Pickup
  - ☐ Trauma-Informed Approach
  - ☐ Key Considerations
  - ☐ Student Drivers/Walkers/E-Bikes/Bicycles/Scooters
- ☐ **Local Law Enforcement and Fire Department**
  - ☐ Meet with local law enforcement and fire department representative to review the planLocal Law Enforcement and Fire Department

STUDENT RELEASE/REUNIFICATION PREPARATION ACTION PLAN

District _____

Site _____

Immediate Priority:

Actions to accomplish within the next month

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY			
WHAT and HOW	**WHO**	**BY WHEN**	**Date Completed**

Short-Term Planning:

Actions to accomplish within an identified time period

SHORT-TERM PLANNING			
WHAT and HOW	**WHO**	**WHEN**	**Date Completed**

Long-Term Planning:

Actions to accomplish within an identified time period that require longer term planning within the site, across district sites or departments, or with outside agencies and organizations

LONG-TERM PLANNING			
WHAT and HOW	**WHO**	**WHEN**	**Date Completed**

STUDENT RELEASE/REUNIFICATION PLANNING GUIDE

Operations Section Leader

Name	Email

Student Release/Reunification Team Lead

Name	Email

Student Release/Reunification Team Roles

Area	Role	Name	Backup	Email
Student Assembly	Student Assembly Supervisor(s)			
Family Check-In	Check-In Area Supervisor			
	Greeter(s)			
	Traffic Control/ Flow Monitor			
	Checkers			
	Security/ Law Enforcement			
Family Waiting	Waiting and Assistance Supervisor			
	Mental Health Support/ Counselor			
	Security/Law Enforcement			
Family Reunification	Reunification/ Check-Out Supervisor			
	Runner(s)			
	Traffic Control/ Flow Monitor(s)			
	Checker(s)			

ON-SITE CONSIDERATIONS	
Student Assembly Area Location:	
Family Check-In Area Location:	
Family Waiting and Assistance Area Location:	
Family Reunification/Check-Out Area Location:	
Confidential Family Notification Area:	
Inclement Weather Plans:	
Evacuation Area for Site Programs/Agencies:	
Family Parking Location:	
Ingress Location(s):	
Egress Location(s):	
Media Staging Area:	

OFF-SITE CONSIDERATIONS	
Student Assembly Area Location:	
Family Check-In Area Location:	
Family Waiting and Assistance Area Location:	
Family Reunification/Check-Out Area Location:	
Confidential Family Notification Area:	
Inclement Weather Plans:	
Evacuation Area for Site Programs/Agencies:	
Family Parking Location:	
Ingress Location(s):	
Egress Location(s):	
Media Staging Area:	
Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) Entity/Entities:	
Wildfire Evacuation, if applicable: (Location, transportation, mobility needs, etc.)	
Transportation Needs: (Students/staff, supplies, mobility, etc.)	

Student Release Drill Types and Levels

Planning



Staff Training



Parent Presentation



Staff Practice



Small Group Student Drill*



Class Drill*



Grade Level Drill



Multi-Grade Level Drill



Schoolwide Drill

*With some or all parent/s/guardians

STUDENT RELEASE DRILL SCHEDULE

Date	Drill Type	Grade/s	Teacher/ Period	Notes

SAMPLE SIMPLIFIED RELEASE/REUNIFICATION DRILL WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS; 1HR

Planning

- Identify roles of staff for the drill
- Identify a number of students to participate in the drill; prepare them ahead of time of what they will see/hear/do

Preparation

1. Determine evacuation assembly area for students
2. Prepare materials (Tables, tape, pens, stapler with extra staples, signage- areas and directions for parents, forms, clipboard, bins with lids for paperwork by grade level, emergency contact binder, cones)
3. Pg. 4: Assign Roles; assign some staff to act in the parent role
4. Pg. 6: Four different areas, divided and separated from each other, to maintain separation between students and families until reunification occurs 1. Family Check-In Area 2. Family Waiting and Family Assistance Area 3. Family Reunification/Check-Out Area 4. Student Assembly Area
5. Organize the Family Check-In Area by alpha or by grade level (or teacher)

Preparation

1. Assume and maintain Incident Command structure
2. Initiate mock EVACUATION to assembly area
3. Access Student Release Supplies, Emergency Response Box, and Evacuation Supplies (water and snacks)
4. Assign Student Release Roles
5. Set up pre-determined On-site Student Release stations
6. Communicate next steps to teachers and staff who are with students at the Evacuation location and convey the situation is under control.
7. "Families" arrive at Family Check-In Area (role played by some staff)
8. Greeters welcome families and ask them to complete the Student Reunification Form or collect completed form (Provide form, pen, and clipboard or table to write on)

9. “Families” submit the completed form and show valid identification to Checker for emergency contact verification
10. Checker notes location of student based on Student Reunification Form and returns verified form to the family member to take to the Family Waiting Area and give to a Runner
11. If a student is listed as missing, injured, or detained, the Supervisor will bring the family to the Family Assistance Area where “Law Enforcement or Superintendent” will notify them, and a Mental Health Support/Counselor will be available for support
12. “Family” is directed to Family Waiting Area
13. “Family” member hands Runner-verified Reunification Form. The family member retains the bottom portion of the form.
14. Runner takes the top portion of form to retrieve the student
15. Upon return, Runner delivers the student and then escorts the “parent/ guardian” and student to Reunification/Check-Out Area
16. “Family Member” is directed to Reunification/Check-Out Area
17. Traffic/Flow Monitors help ensure the parent/guardian completes check-out procedures and then leaves the area immediately
18. Checkers attach the verified portion of the form to the family member receipt portion and maintain records
19. The Reunification Supervisor is present to say goodbye to students and families as they leave

STUDENT RELEASE/REUNIFICATION FORM

Thank you in advance for your patience with this process. Our common goal is to get family members reunited with their student(s) safely and quickly.

Please complete this form and bring it, along with a valid form of identification, to the Family Check-In Area. A Checker will verify you are an official emergency contact for each student listed on this form.

Student's Name	Teacher's Name	Date of Birth	Student Grade

Name of person picking up student(s): _____

Phone number of person picking up student(s): _____

Relationship to student(s) being picked up: _____

Signature of person picking up student(s): _____

****** Top portion for verification by Family Check-In Area – Runner takes form to retrieve student(s) – Family Reunification Check-Out Area to match to Parent Portion *******

Family member: Submit form at Family Reunification Check-Out Area upon release of your student(s)

Student's Name	Teacher's Name	Date of Birth	Student Grade

Name of person picking up student(s): _____

Emergency contact verification by: _____

Reunification confirmation by: _____

Date/Time

Attach both portions of the form and retain for records

STUDENT RELEASE/REUNIFICATION FORM and PROCESS

STEP 1: Fill in Student and Pickup Information for CHECK-IN

Student Name: List the child/children/students you are picking up as a listed emergency contact

Teacher's Name: List the child's TK-5 grade teacher. If middle/high school student, leave blank.

Student's Name	Teacher's Name	Date of Birth	Student Grade
Write student's Name	Complete if TK-5	Write DOB	Write student's Grade

Name of person picking up student(s): Write your name

Phone number of person picking up student(s): Write your phone number

Relationship to student(s) being picked up: Write who you are to the student

Signature of person picking up student(s): Sign your name

STEP 2: Fill in Student and Pickup Information for CHECK-OUT

Student's Name	Student Grade
write student's Name	write student's Grade

Name of person picking up student(s): Write your name

Emergency contact verification by: School staff CHECKER completes

Reunification confirmation by: School staff CHECKER completes

STEP 3: Submit completed form at Family Reunification CHECK-IN Area

STEP 4: Verify ID at Family Reunification CHECK-IN Area

Accepted Forms of Photo ID:

• Driver's License • Passport • Military Identification • Consular Identification

You must be 18 years of age and on the emergency contact card for each student you are picking up.

STEP 5: Keep the bottom part of the form that is given back to you

Student's Name	Student Grade
write student's Name	write student's Grade

Name of person picking up student(s):

Emergency contact verification by:

Reunification confirmation by:

STEP 6: Proceed to the Family Reunification WAITING Area

When it is your turn, give your form to the RUNNER.
The RUNNER will give your form back to you when reunified with your child and will escort you to the CHECK-OUT Area.

STEP 6: Proceed to the Family Reunification WAITING Area

When it is your turn, give your form to the CHECKER.
The CHECKER will verify reunification on the form and release the students to you to exit.

AFTER SCHOOL STAFF: Student Release/Reunification Role Card

As afterschool program staff, you are responsible for following the directions of the assigned position, or as directed by your agency in partnership with the Incident Commander. When supporting students, you are responsible for overseeing the safety of assigned students in your care, or other responsibilities as directed by the by your supervisor and/or Incident Commander.

Responsibilities may include:

- Supervising students
- Student Release/Reunification support role
- Gathering and reporting information to your agency supervisor/ Incident Commander

Priorities:

- **SAFETY:** Remain calm; Stay with assigned students at all times; Do no harm emotionally, psychically, or psychologically
- **LISTEN:** Listen for directions from the Incident Commander
- **FOLLOW:** Follow established emergency procedures. Ex. EVACUATION protocol
- **STAY:** Do not leave; do not permit students to leave without permission through the established process; if students leave without permission, report to the Incident Commander
- **REPORT:** Report necessary information to the Incident Commander (Ex. Attendance)
- **RELEASE:** Send students with the designated student release/reunification runner or other designated staff only; do not release any student directly to a parent/family member
- **COMMUNICATION:** Do not share unverified information; do not make promises to students; do not dismiss feelings expressed by students, family members, or staff; do not force compliance
- **MEDIA:** Redirect any media requests to the school office or designated person to minimize any misinformation sharing

Trauma-Informed Statements:

- Right now, we're safe/We're working to get us to a safe place. I'm here to help you stay as safe as possible.
- Many people are working right now to help to keep us safe.
- This may feel...and I'll do my best to help you feel safe/...and you're not alone.
- The people who care for you are being contacted.
- We'll get through this together.
- I'll tell you what information I can share with you to help you feel as calm as possible so that

  you know what is happening and what is next.
- It makes sense that/it sounds like/I hear/see that you're feeling...this can definitely feel that

  way. Let's brainstorm what can help us while we wait for our turn. What are your ideas?
- We're not able to do [that] right now, because... Here are some choices of what we're able to do...

SUBSTITUTE: Student Release/Reunification Role Card

As a substitute you are responsible for following the directions of the assigned position, an assigned student release/reunification role, or as directed by the Incident Commander/Site Administrator. If substituting as a classroom teacher, you are responsible for overseeing the safety of the students of the assigned classroom or as directed by the Incident Commander/Site Administrator.

Responsibilities may include:

- Supervising students
- Student Release/Reunification support role
- Gathering and reporting information to the Incident Commander

Priorities:

- **SAFETY:** Remain calm; Stay with assigned students at all times; Do no harm emotionally, psychically, or psychologically
- **LISTEN:** Listen for directions from the Incident Commander
- **FOLLOW:** Follow established emergency procedures. Ex. EVACUATION protocol
- **STAY:** Do not leave; do not permit students to leave without permission through the established process; if students leave without permission, report to the Incident Commander
- **REPORT:** Report necessary information to the Incident Commander (Ex. Attendance)
- **RELEASE:** Send students with the designated student release/reunification runner or other designated staff only; do not release any student directly to a parent/family member
- **COMMUNICATION:** Do not share unverified information; do not make promises to students; do not dismiss feelings expressed by students, family members, or staff; do not force compliance
- **MEDIA:** Redirect any media requests to the school office or designated person to minimize any misinformation sharing

Trauma-Informed Statements:

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- Many people are working right now to help to keep us safe.
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  you know what is happening and what is next.
- It makes sense that/it sounds like/I hear/see that you're feeling...this can definitely feel that
  way. Let's brainstorm what can help us while we wait for our turn. What are your ideas?
- We're not able to do [that] right now, because... Here are some choices of what we're able to do...

Student Release/Reunification Debrief Survey

Thank you in advance for your patience with this process. Our common goal is to get family members reunited with their student(s) safely and quickly.

Please complete this form and bring it, along with a valid form of identification, to the Family Check-In Area. A Checker will verify you are an official emergency contact for each student listed on this form.

1. What did you notice; what did you wonder?

2. What worked well, and why?
   What worked the best, and why?

3. What didn't work well, and why?
   What was the biggest challenge, and why?What is needed for the future?

4. What is needed for the future?

5. Questions:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN [SCHOOL DISTRICT] AND [NAME OF FACILITY] REGARDING TEMPORARY SHELTER SITE FACILITIES

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made and entered into by and between [SCHOOL DISTRICT] ("District") and [NAME OF FACILITY] ("Facility") (together, the "Parties"), to establish temporary shelter site facilities and terms of use in the event of an emergency evacuation of students and staff of District.

AGREEMENT

1. Purpose, Scope, and Trigger Event
The purpose of this MOU is to confirm the Parties' respective responsibilities involving the use of Facility's building by District for the temporary sheltering of District students and staff as a result of an emergency evacuation from District. District will make every effort to notify Facility of the possibility of evacuation with as much notice as possible. When an emergency evacuation of District is activated, Facility shall immediately open their building, located at [PHYSICAL ADDRESS], to provide shelter and assistance to students and staff evacuated during emergency situations when students and staff have a need to be sheltered. Facility has capacity to accommodate approximately [NUMBER] people.

2. Term and Termination
This MOU is effective upon the last date signed by the authorized representatives of the Parties, and shall remain in force and effect until the need for such an agreement is no longer present, unless written notice of termination is given by either party. This MOU shall be reviewed at least every two years, or more frequently as needed or appropriate. The resources and services of this MOU are available for use on an as-needed basis. Either party, upon sixty (60) days' written notice to the other party, may terminate this MOU.

3. Facility's Obligations
Facility shall be responsible for opening the designated building and developing procedures for making the building accessible, including restrooms and an area with phone and internet connection, if available, for District administrative personnel.

4. District's Obligations

a. District shall provide supervision for all students and staff during the time that the Facility is used as an emergency shelter site.

b. District agrees that it shall exercise reasonable care in the conduct of its activities while using the Facility as an emergency shelter site, and further agrees to replace or reimburse Facility for any items, materials, equipment or supplies that may be used by the District in the conduct of its sheltering activities at the Facility.

c. District shall be responsible for replacing, restoring, or repairing damage occasioned by the use of any building, facilities, or equipment belonging to Facility.

d. District shall reimburse Facility for any bona fide expenditure of personnel required to maintain the Facility, including overtime costs, upon production of receipts or time sheets. District will not pay any operational or administrative fees to Facility.

5. Mutual Indemnification
Each of the Parties agrees to fully indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the other (including its appointed and elected officials, officers, employees, and agents) from and against any damage or liability imposed for injury occurring by reason of the negligent acts or omissions or willful misconduct of the indemnifying party, its appointed or elected officials, officers, employees, or agents, under or in connection with any work, authority, or jurisdiction delegated to such party under this MOU. Neither of the Parties, nor any appointed or elected official, officer, employee, or agent thereof, shall be responsible for any damage or liability occurring by reason of the negligent acts or omissions or willful misconduct of the other party hereto, its appointed or elected officials, officers, employees, or agents, under or in connection with any work, authority, or jurisdiction delegated to such party under this MOU.

6. Response to Media
District shall provide any and all releases of information to the press and media. Requests for interviews or information submitted to Facility shall directed to the District's Public Information Officer or the District's Superintendent. District will make every effort to recognize the hospitality of Facility in any press or media releases pertaining to the relocation and sheltering of students and staff.

7. Amendments
Any changes, modifications, revisions or amendments to this MOU shall be in writing and signed by both Parties.

8. Severability
Nothing in this MOU is intended to conflict with current laws or regulations of the United States, the State of California, or local government. If any provision of this MOU shall be held to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the validity, legality, or enforceability of the remaining portions hereof shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby.

9. Notices
Any and all notices required to be given hereunder may be emailed as follows:

To District: [EMAIL ADDRESS]

To Facility: [EMAIL ADDRESS]

10. Entirety of Agreement / Integration
This MOU represents the entire and complete agreement between the Parties and supersedes any prior negotiations, representations and agreements, whether written or oral.

11. Counterparts / Electronic Signatures
This MOU may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which, when executed and delivered, shall be deemed to be an original, and all of which, taken together, shall be deemed to be one and the same instrument. Further, the Parties agree that, for the purposes of this MOU, an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as an original signature.

[Signatures of the Parties appear on the following page]

[SCHOOL DISTRICT]

Dated: _____ By: _____
[NAME]
[TITLE]

[FACILITY]

Dated: _____ By: _____
[NAME]
[TITLE]



FAMILY ASSISTANCE AREA



FAMILY CHECK-IN AREA



FAMILY REUNIFICATION/ CHECK-OUT AREA



FAMILY WAITING AREA



STUDENT ASSEMBLY AREA