Low Cost/No Cost Immediately Implementable School Safety Tactics

This document includes a list of options for low cost or no cost tactics that schools can consider as a part of their safety efforts. School leaders and law enforcement officers are essential in determining threat-specific school safety tactics. The below options are listed in no particular order, and are not all inclusive. Schools should apply them in accordance with state or district requirements. To learn more about these tactics and additional steps your school or district can take to plan for emergencies, please reference the Guide for Developing High-Quality School EOPs and The Role of Districts in Developing High-Quality School EOPs.

Conduct Developmentally Appropriate Safety Drills

How to Implement

- ☐ Conduct drills as frequently as schedules and budget constraints allow
- ☐ Assess performance and identify areas of improvement after each drill
- ☐ Record results to establish a baseline to compare to future drills
- ☐ Review information about making drills developmentally appropriate and trauma informed to reduce student and staff anxiety

Intended Effect

Testing an emergency plan can help schools find gaps or areas of improvement. Drills also train school communities and first responders on their roles during an emergency.

Train Staff to Lock Doors during Hours of Operation

How to Implement

- ☐ Designate all doors/access points that should be locked and monitored during school hours
- ☐ Conduct a staff walk through to identify locked doors/access points and clarify responsibilities for staff during hours of operation
- ☐ Inspect doors at regular intervals to ensure compliance and address corrective actions

Intended Effect

Creating a school-wide lock policy could stop a threat from entering classrooms during an active shooter event.

Encourage Students to Report Threats to Administration or Staff

How to Implement

- ☐ Encourage students to consistently report suspicious behavior or potential threats (e.g. during morning announcements and assemblies)
- ☐ Tell students who they should report to and what kinds of suspicious behavior they should report
- ☐ Investigate or follow up on student-reported tips

Intended Effect

Empowering communication enhances the school's ability to be aware of and de-escalate potentially dangerous situations in advance of an incident.

Schedule a Meeting with Local Law Enforcement to Exchange Information

How to Implement

- ☐ Schedule a meeting with local law enforcement entities
- ☐ Exchange information pertaining to the school's emergency operations plan, maps of school grounds and any other preventative or responsive protocols
- ☐ Schedule follow-up meetings to ensure all shared information is up-to-date

Intended Effect

Sharing information ahead of time could speed up local law enforcement's response to an active shooter incident.

Identify a Safe Corner

How to Implement

- ☐ Identify classroom corners that are out of the line of sight from the door
- ☐ Remove all objects/materials so that the spaces are unobstructed
- ☐ Remind students frequently that they need to occupy the safe corner in the event of an active shooter
- ☐ Inspect classrooms often to ensure compliance and address corrective actions

Intended Effect

Moving a classroom's population to the least visible point from the door can reduce the likelihood of an active shooter targeting the classroom.

Be Able to Cover the Door Windows

How to Implement

- ☐ Supply teachers with blinds or paper designed to block door windows
- ☐ Consistently remind teachers that they are to use the provided materials to cover door windows and block the line of sight into a classroom during an incident
- ☐ Inspect classrooms often to ensure compliance and address corrective actions

Intended Effect

Covering a door window blocks the line of sight of active shooters and hides the total number of people in a room.