

Emergency Preparedness and Support

Mercer County Special Services School District Response to Homeland Security Codes

The following threat response actions correlate to the School of Homeland Security Codes. With each code condition are listed the protective measures that have been or may be put in place by Mercer County Special Services School District in cooperation with local, state, and federal authorities. Plan designs are flexible to accommodate the differing circumstances of various types of critical events.

<p>Low Risk (Green)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update district wide and school crisis plans. * Coordinate emergency plans with Mercer County, state, and federal plans. * Conduct crisis management and communications training for employees at all levels. * Implement visitor control procedures. * Maintain current emergency communication lists. * Inventory emergency supplies and equipment. * Disseminate emergency communications methods and resources (i.e., where to get information) to employees, parents, and community.
<p>General Risk (Blue)</p>	<p>Same measures as Code Green:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Update district wide and school crisis plans. * Coordinate emergency plans with Mercer County, state, and federal plans. * Conduct crisis management and communications training for employees at all levels. * Implement visitor control procedures.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Maintain current emergency communication lists. * Disseminate emergency communications methods and resources (i.e., where to get information) to employees, parents, and community.
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<p>Significant Risk (Yellow)</p>	<p>In addition to the measures listed above, the following measures will be instituted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assess increased risk with public safety officials. * Review crisis response plans with program managers, principals, and building and office staffs. * Reassess facility security measures. * Review field trip decisions. * Update employee emergency call lists and review callback process with employees. * Test alternative communication capabilities. * Increase communication with parents and community via web site and e-mail distribution.
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<p>High Risk (Orange)</p>	<p>Same measures as Code Yellow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assess increased risk with public safety officials.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Review crisis response plans with program managers, principals, and building and office staffs. * Reassess facility security measures. * Review field trip decisions. * Update employee emergency call lists and review callback process with employees. * Test alternative communication capabilities. * Inventory emergency supplies and equipment. * Increase communication with parents and community via web site and e-mail distribution.
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<p>Severe Risk (Red)</p>	<p>In addition to the measures listed above, the following measures will be instituted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide staff members to Mercer County Emergency Management. * Assess threat level to determine status of school openings and closings. * Address critical emergency needs under the direction of public safety officials and in accordance with school crisis plans and the MCSSSD crisis management plan. * Coordinate parent-child reunification process, if necessary. * Increase building security throughout the school system. * Continue staff, parent, and community communication. * If schools are open, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancel outside activities and field trips. Restrict visitor access. Enhance exterior security measures. Limit parking near building
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Review of Safety and Security Measures

CURRENT SECURITY MEASURES

MCSSSD continues to refine its crisis response planning and to be vigilant about the safety of its students and employees. Over recent years, the school district has spent considerable time and effort in planning and practicing safety and security measures appropriate for addressing a major critical incident. Among these measures are:

1. Close coordination and emergency planning with police and fire schools.

2. Close coordination with Hamilton Township Health School.
3. New, comprehensive district wide crisis management plan.
4. Individual school crisis plans are being updated including evacuation, shelter-in-place, and parent reunification plans.
5. Employee training in crisis management and communication, including shelter-in-place, smallpox response, threat assessment, front office security, and crisis communication. (Tabletop exercises conducted in all schools in the last 18 months.)
6. Mercer County police officers, as school resource officers, present in all secondary, high schools and middle schools.
7. School door numbering project to aid public safety response.
8. Strict visitor controls; employee and contractor IDs.
9. Cameras on property and at entrances

ANTICIPATED RESPONSE TO HOMELAND SECURITY CODE RED

If the federal government moves its threat condition to red, MCSSSD may institute one or more of the following measures-in addition to the security measures already in place:

1. Provide staff member assistance to MCEM. The MCEM directs all emergency operations in the county, under the direction of the county executive. MCSSSD staff members will

participate with other county agencies, including fire and police in crisis management decisions.

2. This command center, under the direction of the Superintendent, will make management decisions regarding schools and school personnel that are not the domain of public safety officials.
3. Assess threat level to determine status of school openings and closings.
4. Address critical emergency needs under the direction of public safety officials and in accordance with school crisis plans and the MCSSSD crisis management plan. A variety of means are available to protect students and staff members, depending on the event, including evacuation, shelter-in-place, or lock-down.
5. Coordinate parent-child reunification process, if necessary. If children have been evacuated from a school, an appropriate site will be established where children can be reunited with their families. Parents will be notified and will need to present identification when they pick up their child. A parent reunification process might also occur at an individual school.

6. Continue staff, parent, and community communication. MCSSSD will use all available means (including its web site, e-mail distribution, hot line, telephone trees, and the media) to communicate quickly and effectively with parents and the community about the health and safety of students and staff members.
7. Cancel all outside activities and field trips if schools are open. Cancellations could also include before and after school programs, community programs and other events.
8. Increase building security. A number of actions may be taken, depending on the nature of the critical event. Among possible measures are restricted visitor access with staffed entries, limited parking near buildings, and enhanced exterior security (including lockdown drills).

Emergency Messages

MCSSSD broadcasts emergency messages, when necessary, using a number of media. General emergency messages and early and late school openings and closings can be found at <http://www.mcsssd.org> and radio and television stations. Emergency messages are also posted on the main district telephone number – 609-631-9075. Emergency messages are transmitted to local media, and parents are encouraged to listen to the radio or television.

Crisis Response

Effective crisis response is a team effort. In MCSSSD, three offices (the Business Office, the Technology Office and the Office of the Superintendent) play lead roles in shaping the organization's response to critical incidents. In any such event, these offices work with each other, with the leaders at the site, and with public safety officials to provide immediate and coordinated action.

Crisis management

Leading the immediate and long-term response to the incident itself is the Business Office, which is responsible for transportation, food services and facilities. Sound planning and preparation is key.

Crisis communications

Ensuring that students, staff members, parents, the media, and the community have accurate and timely information during a crisis is the responsibility of the Office of the Superintendent with the assistance of the Technology Office.

- * The office is responsible for broadcast of all MCSSSD Emergency Messages.
- * For more information, contact Rick Hillman.

Crisis Intervention

Providing care and support for students and staff members affected by a crisis is led by building level crisis response teams staffed by the principals, school psychologists, social workers, and counselors.