

**Lesson Overview**

The planning process is the key to development of an effective Emergency Operations Plan. An effective school emergency planning process must involve all stakeholders and potential resources.

This lesson provides guidelines on recruiting a planning team. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify key players in the planning process.
  - Describe capabilities to look for when selecting planning team members.
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**Are You Ready?**

School districts have found that developing a successful Emergency Operations Plan requires commitment from all players.

Before you undertake a planning effort, ask yourself:

- Are we doing this Plan because it is the "right thing to do" rather than because of an outside mandate?
  - Is there visible support and commitment from school management?
  - Does the teachers' association leadership support the process?
  - Are the needed community resources and assistance available to help?
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**Key Players**

The following people should be involved in the school's planning process (and should receive a copy of the school's Emergency Operations Plan when it is developed and each time it is revised):

- The local Emergency Manager
  - Public safety decisionmakers
  - Local service agency personnel
  - The superintendent
  - School principals and their assistants
  - Teachers' associations and other unions
  - The transportation coordinator
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**Local Emergency Manager**

The local Emergency Manager is an important expert to involve in developing an Emergency Operations Plan for a school. The Emergency Manager in small towns or rural areas may be the local planner or fire chief.

This individual's experience and expertise will be invaluable in:

- Identifying potential hazards related to the school.
- Developing a Plan that addresses those hazards.

The Emergency Manager should have a copy of the hazard analysis completed for the community's Emergency Operations Plan. The community hazard analysis will be useful when developing the school's Plan.

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**Other External Resources**

It may be desirable to involve others as well, depending on the community, the types of emergencies that are most likely, and the resources and assistance that may be required. Examples of others who might help with the school planning process include:

- Local clergy.
  - The parent-teacher organization.
  - Representatives of local civic or benevolent associations.
  - Representatives from private industry (especially if the industry presents a risk to the school).
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**Valuable Internal Expertise**

Certain school employees have skills that would be valuable in planning for emergencies.

- Special education teachers would know particular considerations involved in ensuring the safety of students with disabilities.
  - Science teachers might know about weather hazards.
  - The school nurse and health teachers would know about first aid and triage techniques.
  - The cafeteria supervisor knows about food distribution.
  - English teachers or the school newspaper advisor might know how to deal with the media.
  - The building and grounds supervisor knows the main building systems and utilities.
  - Some faculty or staff might be volunteer firefighters or emergency medical technicians.
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**Who Else Can Help?**

To identify people who may be helpful in developing and testing your school Emergency Operations Plan:

- Think about the school grounds. Who might be particularly knowledgeable in identifying hazards on the grounds?
  - Think about the school's neighborhood. Who might know about potential hazards in that neighborhood?
  - Think about the larger community. Who might know about the community's vulnerability to particular hazards?
  - Think about the school building itself. Who would know about potential hazards in classrooms, hallways, locker areas, storage areas, and large multiuse areas?
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**Guidelines for Selecting Team Members**

Washington State Emergency Management Division in partnership with Kitsap County Emergency Management offers the following suggestions for the selection of the planning team members:

- Team members should have the ability, commitment, authority, and resources to carry out planning responsibilities.
  - Team members should possess, or know where to find, expertise related to the school and the community.
  - Team members should agree upon the planning purpose and process.
  - Team members should be able to work cooperatively to accomplish their tasks.
  - The team must represent all functions of the school.
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**The First Meeting**

The School Administrator should set the time and announce the planning team's first meeting. At the first meeting, the team may:

- Ensure that all team members understand the scope of work and agree to the approach or planning process.
  - Identify planning tasks and make assignments, as appropriate.
  - Establish procedures for monitoring and approving planning tasks.
  - Establish meeting times and timelines for task completion.
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**Web Resources**

- National Center on Emergency Planning for People with Disabilities  
(<http://www.disabilitypreparedness.com>)
  - National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness Initiative  
(<http://www.nod.org/emergency/index.cfm>)
  - Engaging Parents and Community Members  
(<http://www.rbs.org/research/outreach.shtml>)
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**Summary**

This lesson presented guidance on the types of team members to include in your planning process.

Remember that an effective Emergency Operations Plan results when all stakeholders are asked to contribute.

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