INTRUDER SCENARIO

As the students arrived at ___________________________ School on the first day after spring break, a woman is noticed entering through the bus entrance with the children. Because the teachers on bus duty recognize the woman as a parent and the spouse of the special education teacher, no one questioned her as she entered the building. The woman, however, did not report to the office but went to her husband’s classroom with the children.

When the woman arrived in the classroom, she pulled a handgun from her purse and began screaming at her husband. (Her husband had told her the previous evening that he was going to file for divorce and petition for custody of their child.) The teacher shouted for the students to duck under their desks but before he could finish, his wife began shooting, hitting him three times in the stomach.

Upon hearing the gun shots, a teacher in a nearby classroom called the office. The principal activated the school’s emergency plan and ordered an immediate lock-down.

Scenario Questions:

1. Draw your initial emergency organization, including personnel assigned to each position (by title), in the space below.

2. Where will you establish your Command Post for this incident?
3. After establishing command, what will you do first? Why?

4. What is your first concern in this situation?

5. For what contingencies must you plan?
The police are on their way but it will take several minutes. According to a teacher in an adjacent classroom, a male teacher who is a friend of the shooter and her husband went to the classroom in an attempt to calm the shooter. The teacher reports that she heard two more gunshots but is unsure if anyone was hurt. The teacher also says that she does not know the condition of the shooter’s husband but says that she can hear the students in the classroom screaming and crying. The shooter also sounds hysterical. She is screaming, threatening to “burn the school down.”

A custodian has told the secretary that he is going to sneak down the hallway to see if he can gather more information about what’s going on in the classroom.

**Update #1 Questions:**

1. How does this information change your planning?

2. What should you do about the custodian?

3. How will you communicate an evacuation order to the teachers?

4. How will you evacuate the classrooms in close proximity to the shooter?
5. For what contingencies should you plan?

6. How will you notify parents? What will you tell them?

7. What does the fact that the male teacher placed himself at risk tell you about your school plan?
The police and a hostage negotiator have arrived at the scene. They have cordoned off the area surrounding the school. Fire personnel and several emergency medical service crews have also been dispatched to the school but, at this time, only one firetruck has arrived.

Just as the police arrive, the phone rings in the office. The shooter is calling to tell the principal to tell the police to go away. Then, the shooter hangs up the phone abruptly. The situation in the classroom is uncertain.

The media have picked up the story and interrupted regularly scheduled programming with the news alert.

Three teachers have sent runners who report that some of the younger children are extremely upset and requesting additional help.

Some parents have started to arrive, including the parents of several students in the classroom with the shooter. The mother of one student is sobbing uncontrollably and is demanding that “someone” do “something” to save her child.

Update #2 Questions:

1. What information will you provide to the incoming Incident Commander (the senior officer) during your change-of-command briefing?
2. What will you do to help the teachers who have requested assistance?
3. Draw your organization chart as it looks at this time.

4. How will you work with the police throughout the remainder of the incident?

5. Will you allow arriving parents to pick up their children? If yes, where will your parent/student reunification point be?

6. What will you do to calm the hysterical mother?
7. For what long-range processes must you plan?
It is now approximately 1½ hours since the incident started. Through the efforts of the hostage negotiator, the shooter has surrendered without further violence. Police are escorting her to a police vehicle.

As the shooter surrendered, armed officers and the principal entered the classroom. They were immediate mobbed by the children, all of whom were crying loudly. The shooter’s husband is lying on the floor at the front the classroom and is covered in blood. It is not immediately clear if he is alive. The male teacher who had hoped to mediate the dispute, has also been shot but is able to speak to the police.

Reporters are now on the scene from every local media outlet. Several are trying to interview teachers and students to see how they feel about the incident.

Additional parents have also arrived and are upset that they cannot pass beyond the police barrier to talk to school personnel and pick up their children.
3. What insights has participating in this exercise provided you about your school’s or district’s state of readiness for an emergency situation involving an intruder?

4. What revisions would you recommend for your emergency plan as a result of this exercise?