

Washington D.C. School Preparedness Seminar

Seminar Recap

Panel Session 1: Biggest Challenges in School Safety

David Esquith

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students works to support schools in creating emergency operations plans and comprehensive emergency management planning efforts. School staff need to know what to do during an emergency situation because all too often staff members are usually the first responders. Moving forward the U.S. Department of Education plans to provide this information to the school districts first then give the guides to the school and provide more comprehensive guidance.

Resource: [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center](#)

Whit Chaiyabhat

"He who protects everything, protects nothing"--The Art of War

It is likely that you are not putting your time, resources, and dollars towards your school's highest risks. Schools know their environment better than anyone else and need to develop a better method of prioritizing risks. Recommendation:



1. Plan for and develop countermeasures that stay away from news of the day. Consider a broader view of your risk standard.

2. Do not allow secondary and emotional influences impact your decisions. Move your influences aside when developing a risk based assessment.

3. Resist the urge for a quick solution. Learn to express the importance of pause.

4. Learn to evaluate and communicate based on various factors (policies, environment, and people). Evaluate your problem in the context of the full picture.

5. One size does not fit all. Become a trusted advisor with your leadership. Find the balance between openness and security.

6. Position yourself for success. Dedicate a security planner for your school.

7. Need to move from a risk culture perspective to where the whole community owns the security of the school. Be sure to engage the community in the planning process.

Brian Killian

The Emergency and Safety Alliance (ESA) is a centralized repository that every school in the District can access securely. The site provides resources to kick-start school planning and support to schools that need assistance with planning.

ESA wants schools to feel a sense of ownership over their school response plan. Powell Elementary is an excellent example of a school that owns their plan and has incorporated the whole community in school planning.

Resource: [Emergency and Safety Alliance](#)

Janeece Docal and Eduardo Del Valle

Creating a plan requires 5 things:

1. A Team of Incredibles -- Think about your staff and who may be interested or has certain skills that would be ideal for this group. Don't forget to involve the community in your planning efforts.

2. A Vision -- Need to start asking yourself some important questions such as "Who are students needing special assistance? Allergies? Needing inhalers? How

will visitors be screened? Where are my “strong” and “weak” areas on the campus? What is my movement?

Remember, your vision can change!

3. A Living Document -- Your plan needs to change as the school changes. Involve the local community and integrate them into the school.

4. Exercise the Plan -- The campus has been on alert status more than once, but practicing their plan has led to seamless execution of their plan.

5. Use your Community Resources-- Know you are not alone and that you have resources at your disposal. Use your central office or executive support teams for assistance.

Keynote Speaker: Communication during a School Emergency

George Roberts



“Bang. With one sound, the collective innocence of the room is obliterated.” -Matt R. Senior, Class of 2014

Tips for Educators in a Crisis

- Stay calm, reassuring, decisive
- Be ready to be flexible
- Know your

school’s plan

- Have the cell phone numbers of your colleagues and carry your cell phone
- Have a plan of communication with your family

Videos: [Perry Hall School Shooting Shown in Photos](#)

[Parents, students react to Perry Hall School Shooting](#)

[Baltimore Student Shot At Perry Hall High School; Suspect in Custody](#)

[Perry Hall High School Principal George Roberts](#)

[Perry Hall Love Project- Born To Love](#)

Guest Speakers: Active Shooter

Kelly Wilson

The best way to prepare for an active shooter is to have a policy in place. There is no single one-size-fits-all profile for an active shooter. Emergency Action Plans should address a variety of issues including, but not limited to:

- Method for reporting a variety of emergencies
- Evacuation policy and procedure
- Emergency escape procedures and route assignments (i.e., floor plans, safe areas)
- Contact information for, and responsibilities of, individuals to be contacted under the EAP
- Information concerning local area hospitals (i.e., name, telephone number, distance from your location)
- An emergency notification system to alert various parties of an emergency including: individuals at remote locations within premises, local law enforcement, and local area hospitals
- Establish alternative methods of communication with employees during an incident—including emergency notification system, email, phone, cell phone, text message, and loudspeaker announcements.

Commander Steven Sund

In planning for emergencies it is important to consider the needs of 1st responders. For example, it is helpful for responders to know the floor plans of the schools, access considerations, any hazardous materials they could encounter, etc.

Additional considerations should be taken when communicating with 911. These include:

- First responders need a description of the threat
- The number of shots heard
- Condition of the school (evacuation or lockdown)
- Is the suspect known?
- Are weapons involved?

First responders will follow the National Incident Management System Incident Command System to manage the incident. It is suggested that teachers and staff familiarize themselves with a few ICS courses.

Resources: [IS-100.b-ICS 100 Introduction to Incident Command System](#)

[IS-700.A: National Incident Management System \(NIMS\) An Introduction](#)

Afternoon Keynote Speaker: Behavioral and Psychological First Aid

Sue MacLane

Key Components of Psychological First Aid

- Protect
 - Contact and engage
 - Provide safety and comfort
 - Stabilization
- Direct
 - Information gathering: current needs and concerns
 - Practical assistance
- Connect
 - Connection with social supports
 - Information on coping
 - Linkage with collaborative services

Resources: “The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes-and Why” by Amanda Ripley

“The Resiliency Advantage” by Al Siebert PhD

Quick Guide for Psychological First Aid

Guest Speakers: Biochemical Hazards, Sheltering in Place

Dr. Brian Amy

Schools need to take an all-hazards approach so they are prepared for anything. Bioterrorism is thought to be one of the most dangerous threats to our nation. Bioterrorism is an effective form of terrorism because it is easy to carry out and difficult to detect.

The Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) is a CDC program to aid the 53 largest metropolitan areas to increase their capacity to deliver medicines and medical supplies

during a large-scale public health emergency such as a bioterrorism attack or a nuclear accident.

The Mass Dispensing capability is a major responsibility. The Dc Department of Health relies upon District agency staff & volunteers to assist. The goal is to be able to provide prophylactic antibiotics to District residents (643,000) within 48 hours of detecting bioterrorist attack. Currently, this task requires staffing 16 Points of Dispensing throughout the District.

Resources: [Health Emergency Preparedness Response Administration](#)

Janet Clements

The snowstorm that occurred in Atlanta this winter causing students and staff to shelter in place overnight is a perfect example of the need to prepare to shelter in place. A recent survey asked National Capital Region residents if they would shelter in place following a dirty bomb explosion in D.C. and 70% of respondents said they would shelter in place. However, people would not shelter in place if they were concerned about their loved ones. During emergencies that require sheltering in place at the school, a family communications plan needs to tell staff how to keep families informed about their child’s wellbeing.



Trainings are available to schools and can facilitate a train-the-trainer program to get school crisis teams trained.

Resources: [Preparedness360](#)

[School Shelter-in-Place Training Program](#)

Maryland National Capital Region School Preparedness Seminar

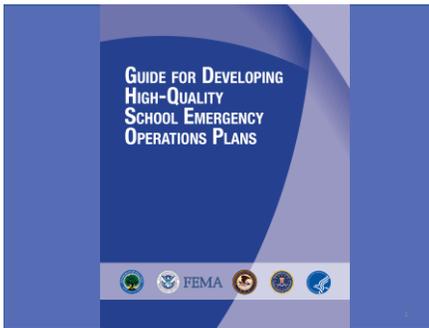
Seminar Recap

Panel Session I: Biggest Challenges in School Safety

David Esquith

Director for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students supports school comprehensive emergency planning efforts and includes the creation of emergency operations plans. School staff needs to know what to do during an emergency situation because all too often staff members are usually the first responders. Moving forward, the U.S. Department of Education plans to provide this information to the school districts first then give the guides to the school and provide more comprehensive guidance.



Ed Clarke

Executive Director of the Maryland Center for School Safety

The Maryland Center for School Safety collaborates with local school systems, law enforcement agencies, State and local government, community organizations, parents, and other groups. With those partners, the Center disseminates information on best practices, programs, and resources; provides technical assistance and training; collects, analyzes, and integrates statewide data; and promotes interagency efforts to ensure safe schools.

Ongoing and effective communications during an emergency is a challenge. Ensuring plans address events which take place outside of school hours (i.e. sports

events, after school activities, etc.) are critical to emergency response planning. Drills should be challenging and dynamic; holding lockdown drills during lunch, or when students are arriving in the morning, or during dismissal. Relationship building is key; an example of this is engaging public safety officials before an emergency incident as it is vital to building a resilient community.



Keith Runk

First Sergeant for Maryland State Police

Classroom teachers are the first responders to incidents at a school – 98% of incidents are over before law enforcement arrives on the scene. Communications prior to and during the incident is a key challenge; what are the warning signs and, what should students and faculty pay attention to? Training students, and determine what level of training needed is a key issue. Parents should also be trained on family reunification sites, and knowledgeable in communication channels.

Keynote Speaker: Communication during a School Emergency

George Roberts

Principal of Perry Hall High School



“Bang. With one sound, the collective innocence of the room is obliterated.” --Matt R. Senior, Class of 2014

Tips for Educators in a Crisis

- Stay calm, reassuring, decisive
- Be ready to be flexible
- Know your school’s plan
- Have the cell phone numbers of your colleagues and carry your cell phone
- Have a plan of communication with your family
- Schools need a parent liaison to manage parents and family members during an incident.

Videos: [Perry Hall School Shooting Shown in Photos](#)

[Parents, students react to Perry Hall School Shooting](#)

[Baltimore Student Shot At Perry Hall High School; Suspect in Custody](#)

[Perry Hall High School Principal George Roberts](#)

[Perry Hall Love Project- Born To Love](#)

Panel Session II: Preparing for the Unpredictable

Kelly Wilson

Protective Security Advisor (National Capital Region), U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Threats and hazards are unique to each school, which is why schools need to conduct their own risk assessments. Identifying hazards will involve all stakeholders, including leadership and the community. Emergency Action Plans (EAP) should address a variety of issues including, but not limited to:

- Method for reporting a variety of emergencies
- Evacuation policy and procedure
- Emergency escape procedures and route assignments (i.e., floor plans, safe areas)
- Contact information for, and responsibilities of, individuals to be contacted under the EAP
- Information concerning local area hospitals (i.e., name, telephone number, distance from your location)
- An emergency notification system to alert various parties of an emergency including: individuals at remote locations within premises, local law enforcement, and local area hospitals
- Establish alternative methods of communication with employees during an incident—including emergency notification system, email, phone, cell phone, text message, and loudspeaker announcements.

The Office of Infrastructure Protection

National Protection and Programs Directorate
Department of Homeland Security

School Security and Resiliency Best Practices

2014 National Capital Region (NCR) School Preparedness Seminar

March 25, 2014



Janet Clements

Senior Program Manager, All Hazards Consortium

The snowstorm that occurred in Atlanta in January 2014 causing students and staff to shelter in place overnight is a perfect example of the need to prepare to shelter in place. A recent survey asked National Capital Region residents if they would shelter in place following a dirty bomb explosion in D.C. and 70% of respondents said they would shelter in place. However, people would not shelter in place if they were concerned about their loved ones. During emergencies that require sheltering in place at the school, a family communications plan needs to tell staff how to keep family’s informed about their child’s wellbeing.

Trainings are available to schools and can facilitate a train the trainer program to get school crisis teams trained.



Shelter-in-Place Training Project

Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program

NCR School Preparedness Seminar

Resources: [Preparedness360](#)

[School Shelter-in-Place Training Program](#)

Whit Chaiyabhat

Director of Risk Management & Strategic Security for the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation (PECF) Washington National Cathedral

“He who protects everything, protects nothing”- Sun Tzu, The Art of War

It is likely that you are not putting your time, resources, and dollars towards your school’s highest risk. Schools know their environment better than anyone else and need to develop a better method of prioritizing risks.

Recommendations:

1. Plan for and develop countermeasures that stay away from news of the day. Consider a broader view of your risk standard.

2. Do not allow secondary and emotional influences to impact your decisions. Move your influences aside when developing a risk based assessment.

3. Resist the urge for a quick solution. Learn to express the importance of pause.

4. Learn to evaluate and communicate based on various factors (policies, environment, and people). Evaluate your problem in the context of the full picture.

5. One size does not fit all. Become a trusted advisor with your leadership. Find the balance between openness and security.

6. Position yourself for success. Dedicate a security planner for your school.

7. Need to move from a risk culture perspective to where the whole community owns the security of the school. Be sure to engage the community in the planning process.

Afternoon Key Speaker: Behavioral and Psychological First Aid

Sue MacLane LPC, CEAP

Everyone who experiences a disaster is affected by it differently over time. Most common reactions to a disaster are stress, and reactions can include:

- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Physical
- Behavioral

Children’s reactions to an event are strongly affected by parents or adults. It is highly recommended that teachers and school administrators are trained in Psychological First Aid. Key Components of Psychological First Aid

- Protect
 - Contact and engage
 - Provide safety and comfort
 - Stabilization
- Direct
 - Information gathering: current needs and concerns
 - Practical assistance
- Connect
 - Connection with social supports
 - Information on coping
 - Linkage with collaborative services

Behavioral Health and Psychological First Aid

*MWCOG National Capital Region
School Preparedness Seminar
March 25, 2014- Silver Spring, Maryland*

*Sue MacLane LPC, CEAP
703-919-3817- cel*

Virginia National Capital Region School Preparedness Seminar

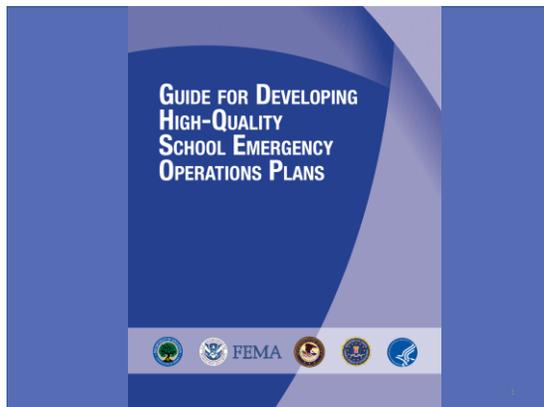
Seminar Recap

Guest Speakers: Biggest Challenges in School Safety

David Esquith

Director for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students supports school comprehensive emergency planning efforts, including the creation of emergency operations plans. School staff must know what to do during an emergency situation because staff members are often the first responders to an emergency event. Moving forward, the U.S. Department of Education plans to provide this information first at the district level and then provide more comprehensive guidance to individual schools directly.

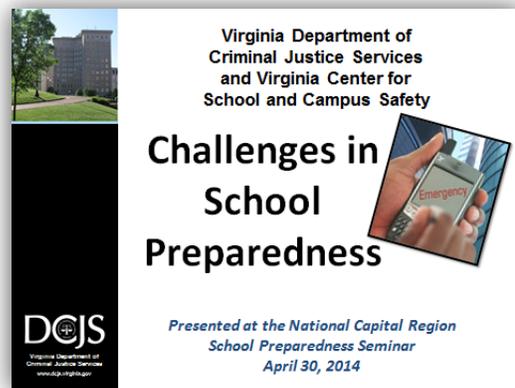


Shellie MacKenzie

Executive Director of the Maryland Center for School Safety

The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Virginia Center for School Safety help schools develop plans, create training guides for school personnel, and drills for all staff and students. Virginia School Safety legislation addressed the challenges in reporting incidents, bullying, threat assessment teams, information sharing, checklists for first responders, lockdown drills, and school safety audit committees.

Some of the major challenges include budgeting, staff, the threat assessment process and ensuring an all hazards approach in a continually changing landscape. The Virginia Center for School Safety advises using clear and consistent languages in plans, provides appropriate training for school staff during in service days (including first aid), and promote partnerships throughout the region.



Panel Session I: School Violence – Responding to the Unpredictable

Janet Clements

Senior Program Manager, All Hazards Consortium

The January 2014 Atlanta snowstorm which caused students and staff to shelter in place overnight is a perfect example of why shelter in place preparedness is necessary for schools. A recent survey found that 70% of National Capital Region residents would shelter in place following a dirty bomb explosion in D.C. However, people would not shelter in place if they were concerned about their loved ones. Schools must develop a communication plan to inform families about their child's wellbeing during an event that requires sheltering in place at the school.

Trainings are available to schools, which can facilitate a train-the-trainer program to enable school crisis teams to respond to unplanned events.



Resources: [Preparedness360](#)

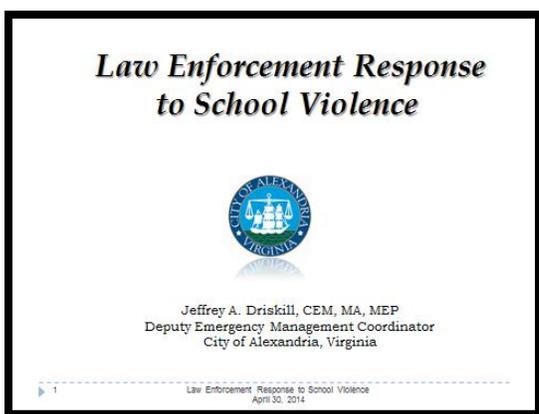
[School Shelter-in-Place Training Program](#)

Jeff Driskill

*Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator,
Alexandria Office of Emergency Management*

A strength of the National Capital Region is the access to resources and the ability to collaborate with numerous partners, including federal stakeholders. Schools should reach out to their local Office of Emergency Management personnel; leveraging assets are done at a local law enforcement and school level. The consideration for low cost solutions, such as planning, are met with challenges such as keeping on track with the planning cycle, funding, comparing priorities, and resistance to change.

Some major recommendations strategies includes training and planning initiatives, preparedness schedules, conducting threat assessments, improving access/visitor controls, and establishing partnerships.

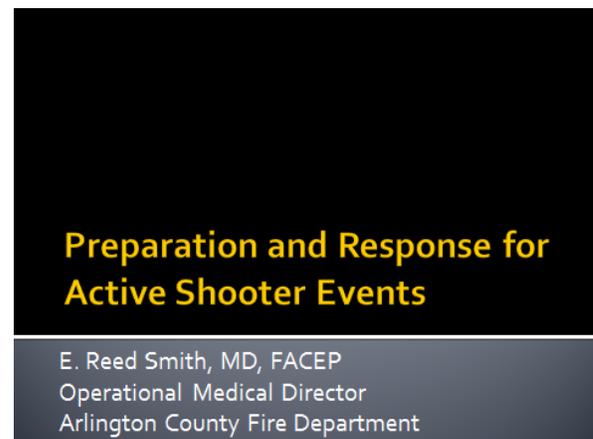


Dr. E. Reed Smith

Medical Director, Arlington County Fire Department

Major events have dramatic effects, but in hindsight all the evidence was there to predict the violent attack. Active shooter is the new threat, and learning the trends and frequency is the key to understanding how to avoid a “black swan” event. In planning for events, personal physiological and psychological response will affect everyone and understanding those affects will strengthen response during a crisis. The survival act can be broken down into three phases: denial, deliberation, and the decisive moment.

In addition to personal response, planners should understand basic law enforcement protocol during an active threat. Law enforcement is going for “the bad guy”, and not coming to help the victims. Fire Response’s goal is to evacuate the wounded and “stop the dying”.



Behavioral and Psychological First Aid

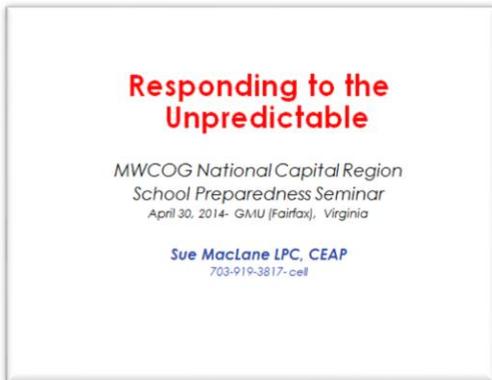
Sue MacLane LPC, CEAP

Disasters affect individuals differently, and their reactions often vary over time. The most common reactions to a disaster are stress which manifests in a variety of ways, including:

- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Physical
- Behavioral

Children’s reactions to an event are strongly affected by parents or adults. To help children cope with a disaster, it is highly recommended that teachers and school administrators train in Psychological First Aid. Key Components of Psychological First Aid:

- Protect
 - Contact and engage
 - Provide safety and comfort
 - Stabilization
- Direct
 - Information gathering: current needs and concerns
 - Practical assistance
- Connect
 - Connection with social supports
 - Information on coping
 - Linkage with collaborative services



Keynote Speaker: Communication during a School Emergency

George Roberts
Principal of Perry Hall High School



“Bang. With one sound, the collective innocence of the room is obliterated.” --Matt R. Senior, Class of 2014

Principal George Roberts provided advice for school administrators’ response to an active shooter event, based on his personal experience at Perry Hall High School. Roberts discussed what his staff did well, as well as actions he wishes they had taken, during and after the event. The overarching elements to Roberts’ guidance were for administrators to stay calm, reassuring, and decisive throughout the process. Administrators should prepare to be flexible during the event and to have a solid understanding of their school’s plan.

Additionally, Roberts suggested that administrators have cell phone numbers of colleagues and to carry a cell phone with them in order to communicate better. He also stressed planning for family communications and identifying a liaison between the school and parents.

- Videos: [Perry Hall School Shooting Shown in Photos](#)
[Parents, students react to Perry Hall School Shooting](#)
[Baltimore Student Shot At Perry Hall High School; Suspect in Custody](#)
[Perry Hall High School Principal George Roberts](#)
[Perry Hall Love Project- Born To Love](#)

Panel Session II: School Safety – What Keeps You Up at Night?

Michael Chapman
Sheriff for Loudoun County, VA

From the school perspective, there is no single task for emergency preparedness. The real challenge is to change the overall mindset of school administrators. Due to the regimented nature of schools, planning and security is also completed in a regimented fashion. There needs to be an increased effort to get away from simply checking the box and be more dynamic in the planning process. For example, schools should conduct important drills, like fire drills, during chaotic times like lunch or prior to a large sporting event. Schools generally do an excellent job of fire drills, but are not as focused on lockdown procedures. Once schools familiarize themselves with lockdown drills, they can be more creative on when to conduct a drill; for example, during lunchtime or the beginning of school.

Bob Smith

Office of Risk Management and Safety, Arlington County Public Schools

The key to balancing school safety, while shifting away from designing the school like a prison, can be a challenge. Although school security design is critical, controlling visitor access and tracking systems is just as vital to the safety component. Issues that can also affect daily operations are court ordered child custody issues, and/or restraining orders. Although there is no single format, and much of the information may be inaccessible. For the most part, schools learn about the information about custody disputes either through the students and/or staff. There is no simple or single source; therefore it is important to try to get the information at the beginning of the school year.



John Wesley Brett

Director of Communications for Falls Church City Public Schools

“The Success of Crisis Communication is directly proportional to the success of communicating before the crisis” – John Wesley Brett.

During an emergency, schools should use multiple modes of communication. Social media is commonly used during an emergency and schools should use the tool to communicate with parents, staff, and students as appropriate. Future emergency response plans should incorporate social

media to ensure that public messaging is coordinated among all response partners.

Training and exercises should include this aspect of the response to the extent possible to promote familiarity with and evaluate established procedures. The City of Falls Church has a mobile notification system for emergencies, which the schools often use. Parents are encouraged to register for Falls Church alerts as well as alerts in neighboring jurisdictions where they may work or live. During a real emergency response, Communicators must balance informing the crisis team and responding to the needs of the constituents.

