

## **Planning and Conducting Drills for Tornado or Severe Storm**

Note: This document is meant to be used in addition to, but not replace, *Prepared for Action – Responding Effectively to Crisis in Your School*.

### **Pre-Drill Activities (Preparedness)**

Determine safe areas in the event of a storm.

- Select an area of the building to be used for shelter by each class or section of the building. For example, interior walls of lower level classrooms may need to be used if students from the top floor will be moved downstairs to the hallway.
- Remember to consider moving in students & staff from portables to the main building if space allows.
- Note that concreteables are rated to be able to withstand 150 mph winds. Classrooms in these building types do not need to be relocated.
- Select an area that people can get to within 3 minutes of the tornado sighting.
- Areas with interior hallways located on the ground floor away from windows are best.
- Areas with interior closets and areas under heavy furniture can be used for protection if time is not available to shelter.
- Gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias or other rooms with wide roof spans should not be used. Never use elevators.
- It is NOT recommended that people in wheelchairs be removed from their chairs, but assume whatever position affords them the most protection.
- Teach people the protective position by kneeling on their knees and elbows with their foreheads on the floor and covering their heads with their hands. .
- Identify other methods of communication if there is no electricity. Flashlights should be included in the school's crisis kit.
- Anyone caught outside during the event should not attempt to run in the building unless they are absolutely sure to arrive before the tornado strikes. Instead, they should be trained to assume the protective position on the ground. If a ditch, creek or other depression is close, the person should take shelter in it.
- Anyone in cars or buses should evacuate their vehicles and take cover using the protective position.
- If a school bus is caught in the open when a tornado is approaching, the occupants should be escorted to a nearby ditch, or other depression where they should lie face down with their hands covering their head.

Determine CIT team assignments for drill and response activities.

- Use staff with no student supervision responsibilities to alert anyone outside the building(s) to take shelter or assume protective position.
- Ensure planning includes special actions for all after-hours, school-related activities in all areas of the campus.

### **Drill /Real Thing Activities (Response)**

- As soon as a Warning is declared/broadcast or staff sees a tornado, identified staff make announcement of drill or actual emergency.
- Teachers should bring roll book (if possible), and if time permits, account for each student present in the area.
- During a drill, all roles should be practiced to include location to safe areas and practicing protective position. Analysis of the drill results will be valuable in making any necessary changes to the plan.
- Persons should remain in the sheltered area until told that drill is over or emergency has passed.
- Practicing of this drill by Transportation staff should only be coordinated or approved by the Director of Transportation.
- Students should not be exposed to danger or inclement weather for the purpose of drills.

### **Conclusion of Drill/Real Thing Activities (Recovery)**

- Once tornado/event has passed, one or two people should be selected to carefully inspect the building for downed power lines and other hazards.
- The Principal should have a list compiled of the students who are present, those known to be injured and left in the building and those who cannot be located.
- Call for emergency help.
- Roll should be taken to quickly identify all present or missing and any injured.
- In the case of a drill, the appropriate report should be completed and logged into the computer system.
- The CIT should meet to discuss the drill and modify the plan as needed. Some things to consider:
  - Do more safe areas have to be identified?
  - Are some safe areas cluttered and need to be cleaned out to be more accessible?
  - Do employees know the fastest routes to take to safe areas?
  - Did the communication system function as needed?