



Welcome and thanks for joining us today. On behalf of Ohio Attorney General, Mike DeWine, I would like to thank you for all that you do to educate our children and to make our communities safer. Today we would like to discuss the importance of local partnerships to manage critical incidents at schools.



Who are our key partners in handling a school-based incident?

School officials, staff, students, and parents; police, fire, and other emergency responders; local emergency management; and other community stakeholders such as mental health providers, hospitals, clergy, state and local agencies:

Schools should always be looking for resources within the community that can assist in managing an incident.

## A Few Examples of School-based Incidents that require partnerships

Incident: Occurrence caused by human or natural activity requiring a response to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property.

**Active Shooter**

**Bomb Threat**

**Wind/Snow Storm**

**Fire**

**Health Emergency**

**Suicide**

**Tornado/Earthquake**

**Hostage Situation**

**Collapse of Building**

**Terrorism**

**Boiler explosion**

**Bus or auto accident**



An incident is an occurrence caused by human or natural activity requiring a response to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property.

As a country we often focus on school shootings and youth violence as the only potential dangers that can occur at a school. However, the range and scope of the different hazards facing a school community are quite broad. Schools and their surrounding communities are exposed to a variety of natural hazards such as floods, earthquakes or fires. Hazards can also originate outside the school such as a bus accident or chemical spill on a nearby highway.

Although the basic response to each type of hazard will have a common foundation, the response to an earthquake, for example, will be obviously different than the response to a hazardous chemical spill, or an active shooter.

## Building partnerships are vital...

- Identify challenges
- Share best practices
- Build on resources and skills

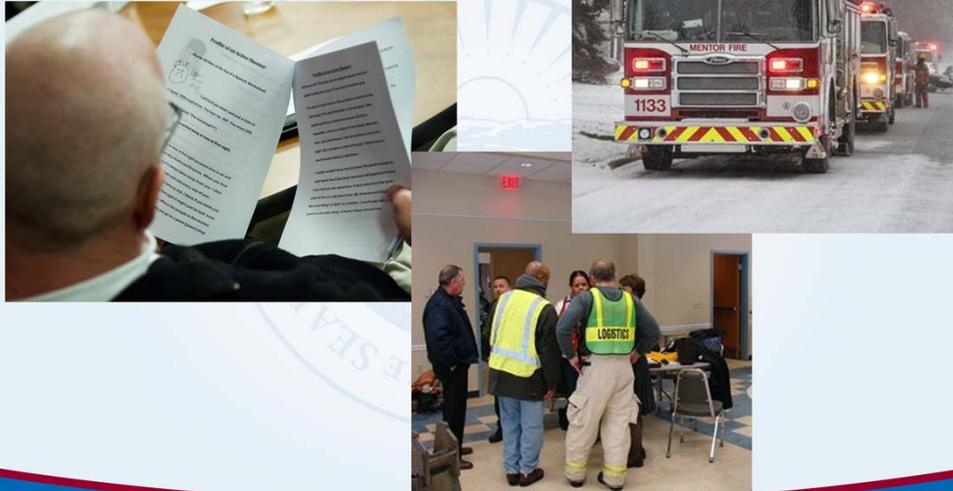


Because there are many challenges facing our schools and communities, building partnerships and engaging the community are vital to preparing for, responding to, and recovering from an incident.

Schools, law enforcement, fire, emergency responders, and community partners must meet and discuss how they will manage incidents.

It is important for each partner in safety to identify challenges that are likely to occur, to share best practices and build on their unique resources and skills.

## Understanding Role, Responsibility and Resource Capabilities



 **MIKE DeWINE**  
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

Although you cannot predict every need for every type of incident, by knowing and understanding your role and responsibility along with that of other partners in safety, you will increase your chances to respond effectively in a crisis situation. It is important to know who will lead the response, who will assist, and how you will address logistics and resource issues, including communication among responders, to the media, and with the community.

For example, common terminology allows school personnel, law enforcement and other safety partners to communicate in a manner that supports a seamless integration of operations.

Through training and practice of response protocols, each partner in safety develops a better understanding of the others' capabilities, roles, responsibilities, and available resources.

## Management of a School Incident becomes a Community Response...



 **MIKE DeWINE**  
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

Community relationships are crucial to providing aid and assistance in emergencies. Developing partnerships with local health and mental health providers, clergy, grief counselors, and others is an important part of safety planning. These relationships and services are critical to recovery and rebuilding after an incident.

These partners are equally important to a proactive, rather than reactive response, to today's threats to our children's safety. Mental Health awareness in the school community is essential to a school's safety plan. Long term success in minimizing risks and increasing the odds of preventing or surviving many types of incidents comes from addressing the causes of these threats, such as mental illness or emotional disorders.

## Preparation and Planning



- Conduct regular assessments
- Discuss results and improvements
- Form a safety and security committee

## Prevention and Training



The keys to successful building of vital partnerships and understanding roles, responsibilities and resources is preparation, planning and training together!

Schools along with law enforcement, fire, and other emergency responders must participate in planning and review security protocols. Safety partners should conduct regular vulnerability and threat assessments of school buildings, property, assets, and operations. These assessments should be supported by a comprehensive emergency operations plan, and regular meetings to discuss results and improvements. Forming a safety and security committee may be one way to accomplish this.

Through forming relationships with and among all community partners, participating in planning and preparedness events, and reinforcing training through tabletop and full scale exercises, you will be better prepared to prevent, respond, mitigate, and recover from a school incident.

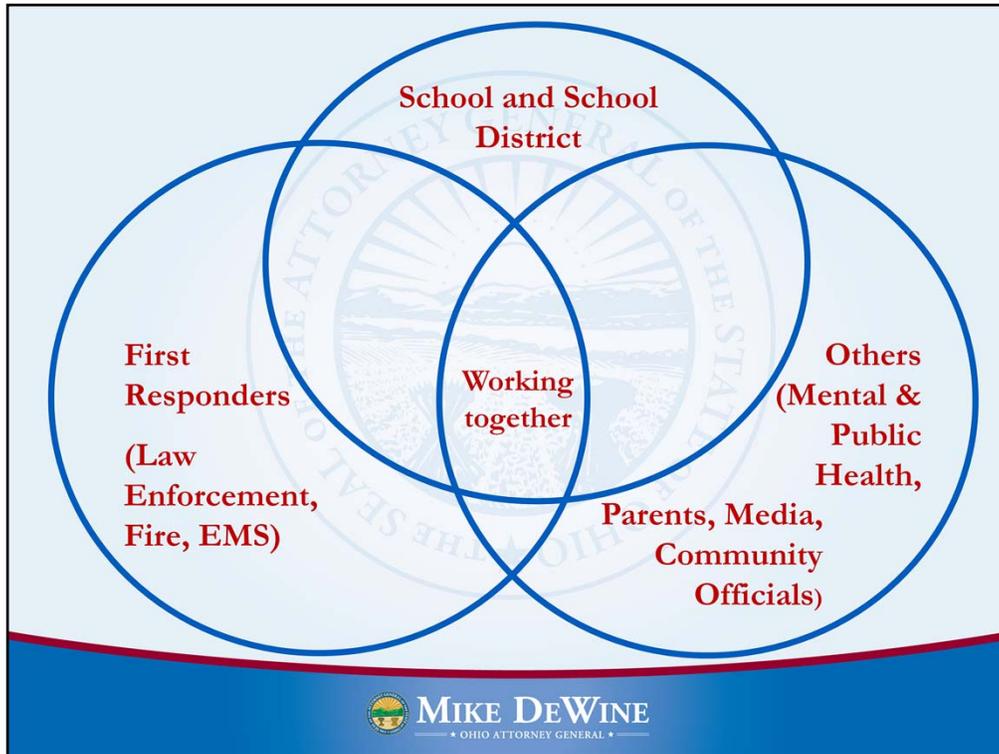
- **Emergency Response**
- **School Safety Plan**



- **Floor Plan**
- **Safety partners – sign off on the plans**

 **MIKE DEWINE**  
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

Every school is required to have an emergency response or school safety plan and a floor plan. School officials and local emergency first responders should work together to develop protocols and include key information in the plans to establish clear directions on what to do in an emergency. The plans must be routinely updated to account for new safety partners and to incorporate best practices. Safety partners should sign off on the plans. The safety and floor plans, important documents and information, and other items such as master keys, student parent records, rosters, yearbooks, whistles, bullhorn, and flashlights must be readily available at a secure place on site in the event of an incident. Remember, your school staff, teachers, substitute teachers, parents and students also need to understand your school's emergency response and safety plans.



Forming relationships and working together create trust. And coordination ensures resources are used effectively, operations work efficiently, and communication is clear among all responders.

Local fire departments must work with schools on fire prevention and potential hazardous material situations. Emergency medical services must work with schools to ensure medical triage and first aid training are handled. Emergency management agencies must coordinate with schools regarding incident command and coordination. If there are other community stakeholders who would be impacted by a school crisis, they too should be part of the crisis planning efforts.

## Examples of specific needs that may arise during and after...

**First Aid:** provide triage, treatment, and psychological first aid services

**School logistics:** providing food, shelter, transportation, staging for medical care

**Facilities & Security:** locate utilities and turn off, if necessary; secure and isolate fire/HazMat; assess and notify officials of fire/HazMat; conduct perimeter control

**Crisis Intervention:**

identification of community resources for support in delivery of goods and services, including mental health, clergy, grief counselors, and other community assistance.

**Communication:** coordination of public information officers of each safety partner on external messages



For example, depending on the type of incident at issue, planning may require consideration of additional protocols and personnel to address specific needs. These may include:

First Aid – schools should train personnel on basic trauma first aid with emergency safety partners. School logistics - which partners can help with providing food and water, shelter, or transportation? Facilities & Security – who is dealing with utilities or hazardous materials? Crisis Intervention – who is helping with aid and care?

And Communication – school and safety partners should have a coordinated response in sharing information with the media and the public.

## Get Prepared!

- It is vital that partners in safety: schools, emergency responders, local emergency management, and community stakeholders meet before an incident occurs to plan an appropriate and coordinated response.
- Part of the planning must include forecasting challenges that are likely to occur depending on the emergency.
- Partners must develop possible solutions to those challenges that are based on local resource capabilities.



Clearly, coordination of efforts and response is imperative for successful management of school-based emergencies.

By coming together to plan and train, safety partners can identify challenges that may arise in each unique incident, coordinate their resources and capabilities, and develop solutions to those challenges.

Working together fosters collaborations that provide for a safer school community.

**As you build your relationships among community safety partners, there are many matters to be considered beyond those mentioned in this presentation...**

- To learn more about recommendations and resources related to school safety plans, training, and mental health issues that impact school safety, please visit our website at [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/SchoolSafety](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/SchoolSafety)

Thank you for investing the time to prepare. Please stay safe!



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## Disclaimer

The information provided in this discussion is not intended in any way to replace the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System training requirements, commonly referred to as NIMS and ICS. Law enforcement and other emergency responders are well trained in NIMS and ICS. They will bring those vital organizational and operational skills to your discussions, as will other NIMS/ICS trained school officials.