

# **TESFA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY (806)**

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Model Crisis Management Policy is to act as a guide for Tesfa International School administrators, school employees, students, school board members, and community members to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the school.

Tesfa International School will, to the extent possible, engage in ongoing emergency planning within the school and with first responders and other relevant community organizations. Tesfa International School will ensure that relevant first responders in the community have access to their building-specific crisis management plans and will provide training to school staff to enable them to act appropriately in the event of a crisis.

## **II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **A. The Policy and Plans**

Tesfa International School's Crisis Management Policy has been created in consultation with local community response agencies and other appropriate individuals and groups that would likely be involved in the event of a school emergency. It is designed so that the building administrator can tailor a building-specific crisis management plan to meet that building's specific situation and needs.

Tesfa International School's Director shall present tailored building-specific crisis management plans to the school board for review and approval. The building-specific crisis management plans will include general crisis procedures and crisis-specific procedures. Upon approval by the school board, such crisis management plans shall be an addendum to this Crisis Management Policy. This Policy and the plans will be maintained and updated as needed.

### **B. Elements of the Tesfa International School Crisis Management Policy**

#### **1. General Crisis Procedures.**

The Crisis Management Policy includes general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, building evacuation, campus evacuation, and sheltering. The Policy designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken. A communication system will be in place to enable the designated individual to be contacted at all times in the event of a potential

crisis, setting forth the method to contact the designated individual, the provision of at least two designees when the contact person is unavailable, and the method to convey contact information to the appropriate staff persons.

The alternative designees may include members of the emergency response team. A secondary method of communication should be included in the plan for use when the primary method of communication is inoperable. Finally, all general crisis procedures will address specific procedures for children with special needs such as physical, sensory, motor, developmental, and mental health challenges.

a. Lock-Down Procedures

Lock-down procedures will be used in situations where harm may result to persons inside the school building, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespass, disturbance, or when determined to be necessary by the building administrator or his or her designee. The director or her/his designee will announce the lock-down over the public address system or other designated system. Code words will not be used. Provisions for emergency evacuation will be maintained even in the event of a lock-down.

b. Evacuation Procedures

Evacuations of classrooms and buildings shall be implemented at the discretion of the director or his or her designee. Each building's crisis management plan will include procedures for transporting students and staff a safe distance from harm to a designated safe area until released by the building administrator or designee. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency situation. The evacuation procedures should include specific procedures for children with special needs, including children with limited mobility (wheelchairs, braces, crutches, etc.), visual impairments, hearing impairments, and other sensory, developmental, or mental health needs. The evacuation procedures should also address transporting necessary medications for students that take medications during the school day.

c. Sheltering Procedures

Sheltering provides refuge for students, staff, and visitors within the school building during an emergency. Shelters are safe areas that maximize the safety of inhabitants. Safe areas may change based upon the specific emergency. The Director or his or her designee will announce the need for sheltering over the public address system or other designated system. The Director will submit sheltering procedures for his or her building as part of the building-specific crisis management plan.

2. Crisis-Specific Procedures

The Crisis Management Policy includes crisis-specific procedures for crisis situations that may occur during the school day or at school-sponsored events and functions. These Tesfa International School-wide procedures are designed to enable the school's administrators to tailor response procedures when creating building-specific crisis management plans.

3. School Emergency Response Teams

a. Composition

The Director will select a school emergency response team that will be trained to respond to emergency situations. All school emergency response team members will receive ongoing training to carry out the building's crisis management plans and will have knowledge of procedures, evacuation routes, and safe areas. For purposes of student safety and accountability, to the extent possible, school emergency response team members will not have direct responsibility for the supervision of students. Team members must be willing to be actively involved in the resolution of crises and be available to assist in any crisis situation as deemed necessary by the building administrator. The building will maintain a current list of school emergency response team members, which will be updated annually. The Director, and his or her alternative designees, will know the location of that list in the event of a school emergency.

b. Leaders

The Director or his or her designee will serve as the leader of the school emergency response team and will be the

primary contact for emergency response officials. In the event the primary designee is unavailable, the designee list should include more than one alternative designee and may include members of the emergency response team. When emergency response officials are present, they may elect to take command and control of the crisis. It is critical in this situation that school officials assume a resource role and be available as necessary to emergency response officials.

### **III. PREPARATION BEFORE AN EMERGENCY**

#### **A. Communication**

##### **1. Tesfa International School Employees**

Teachers generally have the most direct contact with students on a day-to-day basis. As a result, they must be aware of their role in responding to crisis situations. This also applies to non-teaching school personnel who have direct contact with students. All staff shall be aware of Tesfa International School's Crisis Management Policy. The Tesfa International Crisis Management Plan shall include the method and dates of dissemination of the plan to its staff. Employees will receive a copy of the relevant building-specific crisis management plans and shall receive periodic training on plan implementation.

##### **2. Students and Parents**

Students and parents shall be made aware of Tesfa International School's Crisis Management Policy and relevant tailored crisis management plans for each school building. Tesfa International School's building-specific crisis management plan shall set forth how students and parents are made aware of the Tesfa International School and school-specific plans. Students shall receive specific instruction on plan implementation and shall participate in a required number of drills and practice sessions throughout the school year.

#### **B. Planning and Preparing for Fire**

1. Designate a safe area at least 50 feet away from the building to enable students and staff to evacuate. The safe area should not interfere with emergency responders or responding vehicles and should not be in an area where evacuated persons are exposed to any products of combustion.

2. The building's facility diagram and site plan shall be available in appropriate areas of the building and shall identify the most direct evacuation routes to the designated safe areas both inside and outside of the building. The facility diagram and site plan must identify the location of the fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs.
3. Teachers and staff will receive training on the location of the primary emergency evacuation routes and alternate routes from various points in the building. During fire drills, students and staff will practice evacuations using primary evacuation routes and alternate routes.
4. Certain employees, such as those who work in hazardous areas in the building, will receive training on the locations and proper use of fire extinguishers and protective clothing and equipment.
5. Fire drills will be conducted periodically without warning at various times of the day and under different circumstances, e.g., lunchtime, recess, and during assemblies. State law requires a minimum of five fire drills each school year, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 299F.30. See Minn. Stat. §121A.035.
6. A record of fire drills conducted at the building will be maintained in the school's office.
7. Tesfa International School will have prearranged sites for emergency sheltering and transportation as needed.
8. Tesfa International School will determine which staff will remain in the building to perform essential functions if safe to do so (e.g., switchboard, building engineer, etc.). The Director also will designate his or her designee to meet local fire or law enforcement agents upon their arrival if necessary.

C. Facility Diagrams and Site Plans

The school building will have a facility diagram and site plan that includes the location of primary and secondary evacuation routes, exits, designated safe areas inside and outside of the building, and the location of fire alarm control panel, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, water spigots, and utility shut offs. All facility diagrams and site plans will be regularly updated and whenever a major change is made to a building. Facility diagrams and site plans will be maintained by the Director and on file in the Tesfa International School office. Facility diagrams and site plans will be provided to first responders, such as fire and law enforcement

personnel.

D. Emergency Telephone Numbers

Tesfa International School will maintain a current list of emergency telephone numbers and the names and addresses of local, county, and state personnel who may be involved in a crisis situation. The list will include telephone numbers for local police, fire, ambulance, hospital, the Poison Control Center, county and state emergency management agencies, local public works departments, local utility companies, the public health nurse, mental health/suicide hotlines, and the county welfare agency. A copy of this list will be kept on file in the Tesfa International School office, or at a secondary location for single building schools, and updated annually.

Tesfa International School employees will receive training on how to make emergency contacts, including 911 calls, when Tesfa International School's main telephone number and location is electronically conveyed to emergency personnel instead of the specific building in need of emergency services.

Tesfa International School plans will set forth a process to internally communicate an emergency, using telephones in classrooms, intercom systems, or two-way radios, as well as the procedure to enable the staff to rapidly convey emergency information to a building designee. Each plan will identify a primary and secondary method of communication for both internal and secondary use. It is recommended that the plan include several methods of communication because computers, intercoms, telephones, and cell phones may not be operational or may be dangerous to use during an emergency.

E. Warning Systems

Tesfa International School shall maintain a warning system designed to inform students, staff, and visitors of a crisis or emergency. This system shall be maintained on a regular basis under the maintenance plan for all school property.

It shall be the responsibility of the Director to inform students and employees of the warning system and the means by which the system is used to identify a specific crisis or emergency situation. The school's building-specific crisis management plan will include the method and frequency of dissemination of the warning system information to students and employees.

F. Early School Closure Procedures

The Director will make decisions about closing school or buildings as early in the day as possible. The early school closure procedures will set forth the criteria for early school closure (e.g., weather-related, utility failure, or a crisis situation), will specify how closure decisions will be communicated to staff, students, families, and the school community (designated broadcast media, local authorities, e-mail, or Tesfa International School web sites), and will discuss the factors to be considered in closing and reopening a school or building. Early school closure procedures also will include a reminder to parents and guardians to listen to designated local radio and TV stations for school closing announcements, where possible.

G. Media Procedures

The Director has the authority and discretion to notify parents or guardians and the school community in the event of a crisis or early school closure. The Director will be the designated spokesperson who will notify the media in the event of a crisis or early school closure. The Director shall receive training to ensure that Tesfa International School is in strict compliance with federal and state law relative to the release of private data when conveying information to the media.

H. Grief-Counseling Procedures

Grief-counseling procedures will set forth the procedure for initiating grief-counseling plans. The procedures will utilize available resources including the school psychologist, counselor, community grief counselors, or others in the community. Grief-counseling procedures will be used whenever the director determines it to be necessary, such as after an assault, a hostage situation, shooting, or suicide. The grief-counseling procedures shall include the following steps:

1. The Director will meet with relevant persons, including school psychologists and counselors, to determine the level of intervention needed for students and staff.
2. Designate specific rooms as private counseling areas.
3. Escort siblings and close friends of any victims as well as others in need of emotional support to the counseling areas.
4. Prohibit media from interviewing or questioning students or staff.
5. Provide follow-up services to students and staff who receive

counseling.

6. Resume normal school routines as soon as possible.

#### **IV. SAMPLE PROCEDURES INCLUDED IN THIS POLICY**

Sample procedures for the various hazards/emergencies listed below are attached to this Policy for use when drafting specific crisis management plans. After approval by the school board, an adopted procedure will become an addendum to the Crisis Management Policy.

- A. Fire
- B. Hazardous Materials
- C. Severe Weather: Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm/Flooding
- D. Medical Emergency
- F. Assault
- G. Intruder
- H. Weapons
- I. Shooting
- J. Hostage
- K. Bomb Threat
- M. Checklist for Telephone Threats
- N. Demonstration
- O. Suicide
- P. Lock-down Procedures
- Q. Shelter-In-Place Procedures
- R. Evacuation/Relocation
- S. Media Procedures
- T. Post-Crisis Procedures
- U. School Emergency Response Team
- V. Emergency Phone Numbers

#### **V. MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES**

- A. Chemical Accidents

Procedures for reporting chemical accidents shall be posted at key locations such as chemistry labs, art rooms, swimming pool areas, and janitorial closets.

- B. Visitors

Tesfa International School shall implement procedures mandating visitor sign in and visitors in the school building. Tesfa International School shall implement procedures to minimize outside entry into school buildings except at designated check-in points and assure that all doors are

locked prior to and after regular building hours.

*Adopted: March 3, 2015*