

COLLABORATING FOR IMPROVED EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPABILITY [612]

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Session Plan

Workshop Summary

This workshop will focus on a comprehensive approach to improving emergency response and on the benefits and challenges of collaboration between school districts and their partner community agencies. Working in small groups, participants will identify potential partners in their home communities and issues that may be involved in forming collaborations to improve emergency response.

Eleven Kentucky school districts are partners in an Emergency Response Project that is funded by a U.S. Department of Education Emergency Response and Crisis Management grant. Obtained by the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC), the grant proposes to improve the capacity of schools, school districts, and communities to respond to natural or man-made disasters.

No matter how much help may come later from state or federal sources, the crucial first minutes and hours of a crisis or emergency must be managed at the school and community level, using local resources and being dependent on local capacity and working relationships. The underlying theme of the project is to strengthen collaboration among schools, school districts and community responders.

Written partnership agreements have been executed with the 11 school districts and 76 local agencies, including fire, police, emergency management, rescue and ambulance service, health departments, hospitals, counseling services, and city and county general government. Each district has assembled emergency response teams that include representatives of these community agencies.

The GRREC Emergency Response Project has the following five elements:

- Analyze and revise existing emergency response plans
 - Existing plans are reviewed and revised by nationally recognized experts to include federal standards such as the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and current best practice and topics, including pandemics. Drafts of the revised plan are reviewed by district personnel and community first responders to insure that the final plan and local responder practices are compatible.
- Conduct a school security and vulnerability assessment
 - Teams of school administrators and local responders are trained to assess schools for facility

safety issues and identification of possible community hazards that might impact student safety. Each school then receives a school security and vulnerability assessment from the district team.

- Provide comprehensive training
 - District teams receive four days of training by nationally recognized experts in the following topics:
 - The four components of emergency management and crisis response
 - The role of the principal as incident commander
 - Overview of the federal Incident command System
 - Crisis communication
 - Terrorism and schools
 - Crisis response: Human element
- Conduct and evaluate tabletop emergency simulations
 - Each district will participate with local responders in a tabletop simulation of a real emergency, and the response will be evaluated for future improvements.
- Provide emergency procedure guides for each classroom
 - Easy to read flip charts, keyed to the schools emergency response plan and containing specific instructions for over a dozen types of emergencies situations will be placed in each classroom. Teachers will be trained in following those emergency procedures.

Workshop Goals

- Participants will be introduced to a comprehensive approach to improving emergency response capability with an emphasis on collaboration between school districts and community safety- related agencies.

Workshop Objectives

1. Discuss and illustrate components of GRREC Emergency Response Project.
2. Review lessons learned in collaborations between schools and community agencies to increase effectiveness of emergency response.
3. Discuss and illustrate benefits to students and staff.
4. Stimulate participants to think about ways emergency response capability in their schools and communities could be improved with increased collaboration between agencies.
5. Review resources available from local, state and federal agencies.

Workshop Activities

1. 30-35–minute presentation by Ms. Storey and Dr. Keller on the elements of the Emergency Response Project, issues of collaboration and teamwork, and benefits to students and staff
2. 10-15–minute question and answer period
3. 15-20–minute small group activity. Participants will identify possible weaknesses in their existing emergency response plans and opportunities to collaborate to improve emergency response.
4. 10-15–minute report out from small groups

5. 5-minute review by Dr. Keller of resources available from local, state and federal agencies
6. 5-minute summary and closing remarks by Ms. Storey

Assessment

Three indicators of success for this workshop will be observation and discussion with workshop participants and formal and informal feedback from them. Participants will be asked to complete an evaluation form (attached) at the end of the session. The three indicators are as follows:

1. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of emergency response planning.
2. Participants will gain some ideas for improving collaborations in their communities designed to improve emergency response capability.
3. Participants will demonstrate active engagement and participation in the question and answer session and small group activity.

Resources

http://www.grrec.ky.gov/emergency_response_crisis_management.htm

Collaborating for Improved Emergency Response Capability

Evaluation Form

Presenters: Liz Storey and David Keller

Rating: 4 = Strongly Agree; 3 = Agree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree	4	3	2	1
WORKSHOP CONTENT <i>please circle</i>				
The content was relevant to my role in my school or district.	4	3	2	1
Materials were well organized and helpful.	4	3	2	1
I learned something new.	4	3	2	1
I can apply this information to my school or district.	4	3	2	1
The content clearly focused on agenda items.	4	3	2	1
WORKSHOP PROCESS <i>please circle</i>				
There was a clear purpose for each activity	4	3	2	1
The presenter(s) used time efficiently	4	3	2	1
The activity was well organized by GRREC	4	3	2	1
MY OVERALL RATING OF THIS TRAINING IS	4	3	2	1

What worked for you?	Please tell us things to improve:
What are the next steps in terms of using this information in your schools and districts?	