

- Do we exercise or drill our schools to respond to the two or three highest threats as discovered by the HVA? Do we have an adequate system in place for monitoring and controlling the exercise or drill? Do we have adequate follow up after each exercise or drill? Do we coordinate with city and/or county response agencies in our after action reviews?
- What are our lessons learned from the exercise or drill? Do we have an adequate system for implementing change based on our lessons learned?

Second, school and district administrators, in consonance with school board members, should ensure there is a viable emergency management program in place, with designated emergency management personnel who are trained in program design and implementation. The emergency management organization should train itself in the Incident Command System, the National Incident Management System, and other appropriate emergency management courses. The school and district emergency management program should ensure an annual hazard vulnerability analysis and proper follow up to ensure the all hazard plans are up to date, adequate in their ability to respond and restore from hazards, and properly exercised. There are many resources available to aid the school and district in achieving excellence in emergency management, both federal and state resources as well as numerous commercial resources.

What we have found when we reviewed the emergency management programs of more than 50 school districts is that:

- For many large school districts, Prismatic found that a viable emergency management program was in place. This included a designated emergency manager who had been schooled at the FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama or the Federal Emergency Management Institute. All hazard plans were updated annually based on a hazard vulnerability analysis, and students and staff were familiar with response activities for the top three or four hazards. Additionally, these districts had conducted extensive training and drilling with community resources and first responder agencies.
- For one Oklahoma district, Prismatic found that the emergency manager had solid plans in place for every conceivable hazard, and that each of the schools in the district had a safety organization composed of administrator, staff, students and community representatives. Exercises addressing the unique hazards to each school were conducted annually, with detailed after action reports generated.
- In the reviews of many small school districts in Oklahoma, Alaska and New York State, Prismatic found that most had no emergency management organization, and supporting all hazards plans were either nonexistent or so general so as to not pertain to the district or schools.

Resources that could improve the emergency management posture of every school district abound. The FEMA website <http://training.fema.gov/> provides nearly endless training opportunities for emergency managers, administrators and staff, much of which is specifically cogent for school districts. The federal department of education website <http://www.rems.ed.gov/> has district and school specific training. Of particular interest is the protocols in developing an Emergency Operating Plan. In addition to the government resources, numerous commercial resources are available to assist a school or district in developing, maintaining and utilizing its emergency operating plans, such as www.rem4.net, a web-based

product that a district can use to store its plans, protocols, drawings and other tools that can be accessed by all staff on their smart phones during training or actual emergencies.

**We hope you found this resource useful!
Don't forget to check out the rest of the *Perspectives* series.**

If you have any questions, or if you are interested in learning more about how Prismatic can help you, please contact us at info@prismaticservices.com.

