

Nerstrand Elementary School Policy 806
Independent Charter School District #4055

Adopted: 10/08/2001

Reviewed: 3/9/2015

Reviewed: 9/8/2025

806 CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Model Crisis Management Policy is to act as a guide for charter school and building administrators, school employees, students, school board members, and community members to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the charter school. The step-by-step procedures suggested by this Policy will provide guidance to each school building in drafting crisis management plans to coordinate protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency or potential crisis situation.

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

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The Policy and Plans

The charter 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 each building administrator can tailor a building-specific crisis management plan to meet that building's specific situation and needs.

The charter school's administration and/or the administration of each building 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. This Policy and the plans will be maintained and updated on an annual basis.

B. Elements of the Charter school Crisis Management Policy

1. General Crisis Procedures.

The Crisis Management Policy includes general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, building evacuation, and sheltering. The Policy designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken. These charter school-wide procedures may be modified by building administrators when creating their building-specific crisis management plans. 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 first responder response team. A secondary method of communication should be included in the plan for use when the primary method of communication is inoperable. All general crisis procedures will address specific procedures for the safe evacuation of children and employees 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 building administrator or 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. Minnesota law requires a minimum of five lock-down drills each school year.

b. Evacuation Procedures

Evacuations of classrooms and buildings shall be implemented at the discretion of the building administrator or his or her designee for situations such as severe weather, fire, gas leaks, bomb threats or other reasons deemed necessary by the building administrator or his or her designee. The building administrator or his or her designee will announce the need for evacuation over the public address system. Evacuation plans 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. Our evacuation site is Grace Lutheran Church should we have to leave campus. Minnesota law requires a minimum of five fire drills and one tornado drill per school year.

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 building administrator or his or her designee will announce the need for sheltering over the public address system.

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 charter school-wide procedures are designed to enable building administrators to tailor response procedures when creating building-specific crisis management plans.

3. School Emergency Response Teams

a. Composition

The building administrator in each school building will select a school emergency response team that will be trained to respond to emergency situations. All school emergency response team members will receive on-going 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. Each building will maintain a current list of school emergency response team members which will be updated annually. The building administrator, and his or her alternative designees, will know the location of that list in the event of a school emergency. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the charter school office.

b. Leaders

The building administrator 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. Charter 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 the charter school's Crisis Management Policy and shall include the method and dates of dissemination of the plan to its staff. Employees will receive a copy of the crisis management plans and shall receive periodic training on plan implementation.

2. Students and Parents

Students and parents shall be made aware of the charter school's Crisis Management Policy and relevant tailored crisis management plans for each school building via email. 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. Each 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. 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.
5. A record of fire drills conducted at the building will be maintained in the building administrator's office.
6. The charter school will have prearranged sites for emergency evacuation and transportation as needed.
7. The charter 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 charter school also will designate an administrator or his or her designee to meet local fire or law enforcement agents upon their arrival.

C. Facility Diagrams and Site Plans

All school buildings 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 updated regularly and whenever a major change is made to a building. Facility diagrams and site plans will be maintained by the building administrator and will be easily accessible and on file in the charter school office. Facility diagrams and site plans will be provided to first responders, such as fire and law enforcement personnel.

D. Emergency Telephone Numbers

Each building 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 charter school office, and will be updated annually.

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

Charter 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 and Notification Systems

The charter school shall maintain a warning system (public announcement 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 buildings. The charter school should consider an alternate notification system to address the needs of staff and students with special needs, such as vision or hearing.

The building administrator shall be responsible for informing students and employees of the warning system and the means by which the system is used to identify a specific crisis or emergency situation.

F. Early School Closure Procedures

The executive 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 charter school web sites), and will discuss the factors to be considered in closing and reopening the school or a 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 executive 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 executive director is the spokesperson who will notify the media in the event of a crisis or early school closure. The spokesperson shall receive training to ensure that the charter school is in strict compliance with federal and state law relative to the release of private data when conveying information to the media.

H. Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Procedures

Short-term behavioral health crisis intervention procedures will set forth the procedure for initiating behavioral health crisis intervention plans. The procedures will utilize available resources including the school psychologist, counselor, or

others in the community. Counseling procedures will be used whenever the executive director determines it to be necessary, such as after an assault, a hostage situation, shooting, or suicide. The behavioral health crisis intervention procedures shall include the following steps:

1. Administrator 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.

I. Long-Term Recovery Intervention Procedures

Long-term recovery intervention procedures may involve both short-term and long-term recovery planning:

1. Physical/structural recovery.
2. Fiscal recovery.
3. Academic recovery.
4. Social/emotional recovery.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 12 (Emergency Management)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 12A (Natural Disaster; State Assistance)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.035 (Crisis Management Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.038 (Students Safe at School)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 (Reports of Dangerous Weapon Incidents in School Zones)
Minn. Stat. § 299F.30 (Fire Drill in School; Doors and Exits)
Minn. Stat. § 326B.02, Subd. 6 (Powers)
Minn. Stat. § 326B.106 (General Powers of Commissioner of Labor and Industry)
Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespasses)
Minn. Rules Ch. 7511 (Fire Code)
20 U.S.C. § 1681, *et seq.* (Title IX)
20 U.S.C. § 6301, *et seq.* (Every Student Succeeds Act)
20 U.S.C. § 7912 (Unsafe School Choice Option)
42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.* (Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 407 (Employee Right to Know – Exposure to Hazardous Substances)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 532 (Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove Students with IEPs from School Grounds)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to Charter School Buildings and Sites)