

TABLE TOP EXERCISES

	CATEGORY	SCENARIO
1	Secondary	Bomb goes off in school
2	Secondary or Elementary	Air contamination with mass casualties
3	Elementary or Secondary	Bomb threat
4	Elementary or Secondary	Murder of students
5	Elementary or Secondary	Raw sewage leak in cafeteria
6	Elementary or Secondary	Fire and vandalism in school
7	Elementary or Secondary	Bad gas leak in school
8	Elementary or Secondary	Winter with snow & no electricity
9	Elementary or Secondary	Bad bus accident
10	Secondary	Driving death after prom
11	Secondary or Elementary	Suicide of student at home
12	Secondary or Elementary	Adult in classroom with gun
13	Secondary	Suicidal student with gun
14	Elementary or Secondary	Noxious gas leak near school
15	Elementary	Parent with restraining order taking child
16	Elementary	Possible abduction on field trip
17	Elementary or Secondary	Administrator get attacked by parent
18	Secondary	Student shot at basketball game
19	Elementary or Secondary	Student seriously injured at play
20	Elementary or Secondary	Teacher dies in school

- Pick one person to lead an exercise. Do NOT pass out a hard copy of the exercise prior. The leader will read each section, then follow the directions listed to get feedback from participants. "Other Facts," if available, can be shared with the group as appropriate. In some cases, the items in "other facts" can be used as answers if someone asks for that information. Most of these can be reviewed in under 30 minutes.
- Have a copy of your Safe School Plan available for reference.
- Complete the evaluation form in the back to maintain a record of performance and opportunities to improve response.

Several of these scenarios were taken, with permission, from Problem Solving Exercises written by Judy M. Brunner and Dennis K. Lewis, available through EDU SAFE Co. Website: www.edu-safe.org

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 1

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: 17 year old Chad arrives at school at 7:40 a.m. and tells his best friend John that his girlfriend of two years recently broke up with him because she likes someone different who attends the same school. Chad admits that he is angry with his girlfriend and her new boyfriend (he does not know who this is) and plans to "get even" with them. He proceeds to tell John that he has made and planted a homemade bomb somewhere in one of the school lockers but does not identify where the locker is.

After giving John this information, Chad takes off in his car leaving John with the above information. John immediately goes to the Principal who in turn calls the police and Service Center. School officials are aware that Chad is in the advanced chemistry class and has some knowledge of what elements in an explosive device could cause real damage.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

As the school is being evacuated an explosion is heard in the locker area across from the library.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

Other Facts:

- 764 of the school's 796 students and 79 of 85 staff are safe and accounted for outside the building. (*insert your own figures here*)
- 27 students and 5 staff have been transported to either nearby hospitals.
- The extent of the injuries is unknown.
- It is unknown whether there are any fatalities.
- Parents and relatives of students and staff are beginning to arrive at the school.
- Five students and one staff are unaccounted for.
- News crews are arriving at the school.
- The police located and interviewed Chad and believe that no other explosives are in the school.
- The physical damage is confined to the library, two classrooms and the hallway opposite the library.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 2

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: 8:10 a.m. The Principal is notified by the school nurse that several members of the school chorus have become ill during practice. This is the final rehearsal of the chorus for the Holiday Concert in the school auditorium. Initially two members of the chorus began feeling faint. The choral instructor had them escorted from the auditorium to the nurse's office. Symptoms were headaches, light headed and dizzy, they were sweating and their skin was hot and damp. The school nurse first thought it was the flu or a cold, possibly drug use. One student could not focus or answer routine questions. The nurse has called for an ambulance. A third member of the chorus was just sent to the nurse's office.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

The riser area on the stage is very warm. The spot lights are on and the students are crowded together under a shell installed on the stage to improve acoustics for choral concerts. The ventilation system is working but the air under the concert shell is stagnant. Many of the students are wearing winter sweaters and clothing appropriate to the cold weather outside. There is considerable stress as they put the finishing touches on the most important concert of the year.

8:15 a.m. The first 2 students who were sent to the nurse's office are transported to the hospital. The choral instructor has been monitoring the other members of the chorus and notices that other students are not feeling well. Three more students are sent from the practice to the nurse's office. He decides to take more breaks to get water and get off the hot stage.

8:20 a.m. The TPS PD officer tells the choral instructor to evacuate his students from the auditorium and keep them away from other students. The officer notifies dispatch of a possible mass casualty situation and the school goes into lockdown. The HVAC is shut down.

8:25 a.m. Nine more students are sent to see the nurse, bringing the total to 15. They were complaining of headaches. First responders begin to arrive. A triage room is established in the school for the members of the chorus who were feeling sick and requesting medical assistance.

8:30 a.m. Eight agencies have responded (PD, HAZMAT Team, City Emergency Management, FD, EMS, Health Department, PSO and ONG). The Health Department assumes incident command at this time and is overall in charge. Parents begin arriving as soon as the emergency responders. Some demand their children be released to them.

8:35 a.m. The first media briefing is held by the incident commander and the Principal. Updates are scheduled for every 60 minutes.

8:40 a.m. A total of 16 more students from the chorus are complaining of similar symptoms, bringing the total to 31. They are transported to two local hospitals.

8:45 a.m. The HAZMAT Team is taking air samples immediately with instantaneous results. Nothing is detected. Air testing continues.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 3

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: Ten minutes before first class is to begin, a phone call is received at your school. Ms. Note, the secretary, answers the telephone. A person on the other end of the line makes a bomb threat. The caller says there is a bomb set to go off in your school at 9:00 AM. The secretary informs the Principal of the phone call.

The Principal informs the Service Center of the bomb threat and the related details. Also, informs the Superintendent of the fact the students are scheduled to take the math portion of the NECAP test in the cafeteria in 1 hour. The Principal calls together the appropriate members of the School Safety Team to assess the threat and to quickly decide what action to take.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

15 minutes later: Law enforcement has established a perimeter around the school. Parents are calling asking if there has been a bomb threat at the school. They are driving to the school to pick up their child. Local media representatives are calling school representatives and law enforcement. The phone call has been traced back to a pay phone at the convenience store located three blocks from the school.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

Other Facts:

- This is the third bomb threat this semester.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 4

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: It is two days before the beginning of the school year, with teachers scheduled to begin tomorrow and students the following day. A parent in your school neighborhood calls to inform you that two of your students and their mother were murdered in their home last night. The students were very popular and were involved in many activities both in school and the community.

This is a close knit community with neighbors often socializing at a variety of community functions. The murders have put the neighborhood in a state of panic.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

Other Facts:

- The murderer has not yet been caught.
- There was a similar murder in the neighborhood a few years ago.
- At this time the police have no leads.
- This incident is receiving national attention from the news media and they are camped out around the school.
- Parents will not let students walk to school so the cars in and out of the parking lot has become a serious problem.
- Children are visibly upset throughout the day.
- The police are willing to do whatever we ask of them.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 5

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: A half-hour before lunch is to be served the sink backs up and sends sewage water all over the food service area and into the cafeteria. The cafeteria workers refuse to serve the food because of their fear of contamination and the smell in the cafeteria. They call their boss who tells them to leave the area until it is cleaned up and the health inspector checks it out. The sewage smell is beginning to drift down the corridor into the classrooms.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

The custodian goes to the area and says that the water is still leaking out and a plumber should be called. He estimates that it will take a few hours to clean up the sewage and disinfect the area. He says that it would not be ready for the end of the day. Some of the cafeteria workers are complaining of feeling sick to their stomachs. You are concerned about the smell that is beginning to permeate the area.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

Other Facts:

- The custodian refuses to clean the area without proper safety equipment.
- This area is used as a waiting area for all bus students at the end of the day.
- Students will not be served lunch in the cafeteria and must eat elsewhere.
- The teachers' union representative reminds you of the lunch time stipulation in the contract.
- There are 3 classrooms opposite the cafeteria.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 6

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: On Sunday you receive a call from the police saying that your school has been vandalized and a fire was set in two classrooms. Three classrooms were ransacked prior to the fire being set in the other two. Much of the wing that housed the classrooms that were set on fire suffered smoke damage, making the wing unusable until the smoke damage has been taken care of.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

Other Facts:

- The rooms that were ransacked had tests locked up in the files cabinets.
- The file cabinets were opened and the tests destroyed.
- You cannot get into the rooms that were set ablaze until it is declared structurally safe. There are tests in those rooms.
- A total of 8 rooms have been impacted by the smoke and/or fire in that wing.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 7

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: A driver was making a delivery to the rear of your school and backed into a natural gas pipe causing it to leak. There was no fire or explosion at this time, but the gas was leaking into the school through some open classroom windows. The driver leaves the truck where it is and runs from the area due to fear of explosion. The gas is leaking into the room where the students and teacher are beginning to feel the effects from the fumes and evacuate the room.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

The teacher, in his state of anxiety, forgets to close the door. A teacher in a nearby room begins to smell the gas and calls the office with a report. The exit door next to the gas leak is used by several classrooms to leave the school during an evacuation of the building.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently?

Other Facts:

- Natural gas is highly explosive and you cannot make an announcement over the PA in fear that it might cause a spark.
- Some of the students who were in the room that was first evacuated are saying they feel sick.
- The school nurse is at another building.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 8

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: It is a very cold snowy Monday when the electrical power goes out to the school. You immediately call the electric company to be told there was an accident and a main line transformer has been put out of service causing a widespread electrical outage. The area of the outage includes several schools and a hospital. You call the superintendent to discuss the situation and she tells you that there are 4 elementary and 2 secondary schools that have been affected by the outage.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

Other Facts:

- The superintendent is planning to dismiss all schools early due to the rapidly mounting snow.
- The building temperature is beginning to fall fairly fast because it is early on Monday and the heat is usually turned down over the weekend.
- The busses will be running late due to the weather conditions.
- The lavatories have no emergency lights in them.
- Lunch cannot be served.
- There is no hot coffee in the teacher's room.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 9

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: It is early on Wednesday morning when you receive a call from transportation telling you one of your busses was in an accident at Main St. and Cross Rd. at the traffic light. He tells you that the police and EMTs have been dispatched to the scene and there is a report of very serious injuries on the bus.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

Other Facts:

- At the hospital you are told that one of the students has died.
- The student has a sister who is at your school and was on the bus at the time of the accident. She received minor injuries and will be released from the hospital tomorrow.
- The father of the boy is an active member of the community and coaches his child's soccer team.
- There were a total of 37 students on the bus – 4 received serious, but not life threatening, injuries that will require hospitalization of about 3 weeks. The remaining students will be released anywhere from overnight to about 4 days.
- According to witnesses, the bus driver was at fault as she ran a stop sign and was hit by a large truck.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 10

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: You just got home from chaperoning the Junior Prom when you receive a call from the police telling you that there was a car crash involving students going home from the prom. The students have been transported to hospital. You get to the hospital to find out that one of the students, the junior class president, died.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

The driver, another student at your school, was injured, but will be OK. Unfortunately, the driver will be charged with driving drunk, death resulting. The girl that died was very popular and involved in lots of activities in and out of school.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

Other Facts:

- Her mother is a teacher at a local elementary school in your school district.
- Her father is a police officer in another city.
- She has a younger brother that attends the local junior high school.
- The driver is the son of the school board president.
- The accident has been all over the news and there will be school on Monday.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 11

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: You are the administrator in charge and your school has just taken up when your secretary says that you need to visit with Laura Crouse, a 7th grade student. Laura, who is crying, tells you that her best friend, Beth Rey, committed suicide last night. Beth Rey is another 7th grade student at your school.

Laura lives next door to Beth, and you are told that Beth's mother found Beth in her bedroom this morning. You send Laura to be with a counselor. Before you can do anything else, your secretary tells you that the police department has called and an officer has been dispatched to the school to talk with you concerning a student death.

YOU KNOW:

- Beth Rey was caught with alcohol at school yesterday and she was removed from the cheerleading squad
- Beth's mother has not been supportive of the school in the past

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 12

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: Becky Sylvester, an 11th grade student, enters the office crying hysterically. She tells you that a man she thinks is her English teacher's husband is in the classroom waving a gun, saying he is going to kill the teacher. Becky says that he acts drunk and keeps yelling that she (Mrs. Caster, the English teacher) is not going to divorce him. Becky says that she sits near the back of the classroom and slipped out when the man's back was turned.

YOU KNOW:

- Mrs. Caster told you yesterday that she had filed for divorce
- Mrs. Caster has told you that her husband can be violent and has been drinking a lot recently
- Divorce papers were to have been served on him today

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 13

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: You are the classroom teacher and receive a call on the telephone from the principal. He confirms with you that Tom Eubanks, a student, is present in your class. The principal tells you there is a possibility that Tom may have a gun with him and may be suicidal. You are told the police have been called.

Have any classroom teachers participating explain (a) what actions would you be taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

The principal tells you he will call you back shortly to let you know how the police wish to get Tom out of your classroom. As soon as you hang up the receiver, you notice Tom staring at you. Tom then begins to collect his belongings and announces he is not feeling well and is leaving.

Roundtable: Have all others around the table explain (a) what actions would you be taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

YOU KNOW:

- You believe that Tom suspects the telephone conversation was about him
- The rest of the class has taken note of the conversation but do not seem alarmed
- Tom has a large book bag with him, which is a normal occurrence.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 14

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: It is about 9:30 a.m. on a warm, breezy, spring day, and you are the administrator in charge. Your secretary calls you and says that several classroom teachers have called in via intercom indicating they have a noxious odor in their classrooms. The teachers are reporting that multiple students are becoming sick at their stomachs.

As you end the conversation a cafeteria worker enters the office and tells you that there is a noxious odor in the cafeteria area. Your secretary calls again to say that several more teachers have now called in complaining of an odor in their rooms.

YOU KNOW:

- Your school is adjacent to a highway and railroad tracks
- You are beginning to notice an odor in your office

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 15

CATEGORY: Elementary

SCENARIO: You are the principal and have just arrived back at your school after a meeting across town. As you exit your car you observe a woman you believe to be Nancy Cline leading student Sammy Cline to a nearby car. Sammy appears to be willingly going with Ms. Cline, who is Sammy's biological mother. Ms. Cline looks your direction and upon observing you, quickens her pace and attempts to get Sammy into a small car.

YOU KNOW:

- Ms. Cline and her ex-husband Stanley were divorced late last year
- Several times during the divorce the police were called to the school when she and her husband became involved in serious disturbances
- Mr. Cline was awarded full custody and a restraining order is currently in place forbidding contact by Ms. Cline with Sammy.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 16

CATEGORY: Elementary

SCENARIO: You are the teacher in charge of twenty-three third grade students on a field trip to Oxley Nature Center. After spending several hours at the center you have loaded the bus for the return trip when you discover that Maria Mendosa is not on the bus. A check of the immediate vicinity does not locate her. In talking with the other children, student Clifford McGinnis tells you that he saw Maria go walking with a man who was carrying a small puppy. Clifford is unable to be any more specific.

YOU KNOW:

- Maria is an ESL (English as a Second Language) student who has just recently enrolled in your school
- No other students remember seeing Maria with a man carrying a puppy
- Besides a parent volunteer and the bus driver, you are the only adult from the school on the field trip

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 17

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: While talking to the secretary, you get a call from the cafeteria lunch server asking you to come to the cafeteria. Upon your arrival at the cafeteria you see the lunch server standing next to a student who has had several discipline problems during the year. The lunch server explains to you that John was caught attempting to steal an entire lunch by walking out the in-door with a full tray of food.

This was not the first time this year that John has attempted to steal food out of the cafeteria. The other times, John quickly pulled the money out of his pocket and paid for the lunches. You decided that this was the final straw and to suspend John for two days, with a letter home to the parent explaining the circumstances for the suspension.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) whether you think this is the appropriate action to take at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

As the day draws to a close, you hear a rather loud and belligerent parent in the outer office yelling at the secretary that he wants to see the f-----ing principal. Hearing the commotion, several teachers and a few students begin to gather near the office. At which point you come out of the office and quietly ask him to come into your office where he can talk to you. He becomes even more belligerent yelling that you're not going to tell him what to do, and that his son will come to school tomorrow because the lunch lady is a crazy old bat who picks on his son.

You explain the situation to him and tell him he will not be allowed to come to school because of a 2 day suspension. At that point he yells at you and says that we'll see who going to be in school tomorrow and punches you in the jaw and walks out of the building.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, (b) what additional information would you like to know, and (c) who else needs to be involved.

Other Facts:

- John's father is well known to the police.
- John always has money on him, although he doesn't have a job that you are aware of.
- There has been a rash of thefts from students and faculty in the last few months.
- Several students and faculty members witnessed the attack.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 18

CATEGORY: Secondary

SCENARIO: It was the night of a very important basketball game. Your school and the team they were playing were tied for first place in the division and the season was almost over. You had seen this team play before and were rather rough on their opponents. This team came from a tougher part of the state and because the game meant so much, had lots of supporters from their school with them. Early during the play, you could feel the excitement and tension in the air.

It was a hard fought game with both sides having pushing fouls called against them. At one point in the game, when the referee called a foul against the opponents, a can of soda was thrown at the referee missing him by a foot. The game ended with your team winning in overtime. As your team began to walk off the floor, after the handshakes, more cans were thrown out onto the floor towards your team.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know. Begin with someone from Athletics.

Your coach did a great job of quickly moving the team into the locker room. Several students from your school started to yell at the other school. It quickly escalated when they started swearing and threatening each other. With that, the two groups started to move towards each other when a shot rang out and one of your cheerleaders fell to the floor wounded. Screaming, yelling, running and total chaos took over.

Roundtable: What is your response now? What are you doing differently? Who else needs to be involved?

Other Facts:

- The police officer on duty was in the hall watching the people leave when the shooting took place.
- A parent, who identified herself as a nurse, went to the aid of the cheerleader.
- Someone in the crowd must have called 911 as you could hear the sounds of sirens.
- Most people were panicking and running out the gym doors.
- Someone pulled the fire alarm and the sound of the alarm added to the confusion.
- At this point, you believe that there was only one person shot.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE 19

CATEGORY: Elementary

SCENARIO: It was a beautiful day for the students to be out at recess playing games and playing on the jungle gym. The older students decided to have a game of softball with the students choosing fairly even sides. The teams were made up of 4th and 5th grade students. Jim Pearson, a large 5th grade student was batting. Jim, although big for his age, was not very athletic. Today luck was with him and he hit a solid hit into the outfield. Jim was so excited he threw his aluminum bat and began to run towards first base. Suddenly there was a scream and then a thump as Mary Sternum fell to the ground, blood coming from her face. The lunch aide ran to Mary's side pulling out a handkerchief to try and stop the bleeding. She yelled to the students to get the school nurse.

You were in the cafeteria when several students came running in screaming and crying that Mary Sternum was dead on the playground. She had been hit in the head with a baseball bat and was on the ground bleeding, "LOTS!"

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know...

Other Facts:

- The nurse was not in the building and a 6th grade student was manning the secretary's desk, as she is at lunch.
- You know that Mary Sternum is a petit 4th grader.
- Her little brother is in the cafeteria having lunch.
- Most of the lunch aides are senior citizens and one has a heart problem.

TABLE TOP EXERCISE 20

CATEGORY: Elementary or Secondary

SCENARIO: Mr. Jefferson had been teaching physical education in your school for the past 18 years and was well known by the students. Mr. Jefferson was about 53 and somewhat overweight. That fact, however, did not prevent him from taking an active part in his physical education classes often demonstrating many of the skills he was teaching. Today he brought his class outside to practice some soccer skills, demonstrating many of the skills he asked the students to learn.

The class was almost over when he collapsed on the ground and did not move. Many of the students started to panic and cry. A few of the boys, who were scouts, ran over in an attempt to help him. One of the boys yelled for someone to get help. A few of the students ran to the building to summon help from an adult inside.

You were walking down the corridor when your secretary called you on your walkie-talkie. She told you what happened and that she had called EMS. You hurried out to the field to render assistance. When you got to the scene Mr. Jefferson was on the ground not responding at all. EMSA got there within a matter of 3 minutes and took over.

Roundtable: Have each person around the table explain (a) what actions are you taking at this time, and (b) what additional information would you like to know.

Other Facts:

- Mr. Jefferson had no life signs in the ambulance, even though the paramedics tried many things to revive him.
- About a half hour after you arrived at the hospital, a doctor came out and informed you that Mr. Jefferson was just pronounced dead. That was at 10:30 am.
- Mr. Jefferson's family had not yet arrived at the hospital.
- Mrs. Jefferson taught 5th grade in a neighboring school system.
- The Jefferson's had a daughter who had just started her first year of college out of state.
- There were about 30 students in Mr. Jefferson's class when he collapsed.
- Mr. Jefferson coached the high school football team.

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TABLE TOP EXERCISE WORKSHEET

School: _____ Principal: _____

I. INVESTIGATIVE PHASE:

What happened?

Where?

When?

Who's Affected?

II. RESPONSE PHASE

Do what? (Evacuation, Reverse Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown, Recovery)

How will you announce?

Call Who?

Go where?

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Bring what? _____

Command Post/Media Center Locations? _____

Specifically, who does what? _____

Reunification, where & who? _____

Recovery Plan and other notes? _____
