

THE AMERICA PREPARED CAMPAIGN, INC.



**Preparedness in America's Schools: A Comprehensive Look  
at Terrorism Preparedness in America's Twenty Largest School Districts**

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## ABOUT THE AMERICA PREPARED CAMPAIGN, INC.

The America Prepared Campaign is a non-profit, non-partisan initiative that uses the expertise and energy of national leaders in emergency preparedness, media, marketing, government, and business to give citizens tools and information for preparing their homes and families for disaster, with a focus on terrorism preparedness. The Campaign is funded by The Alfred P. Sloan and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundations.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In the ten months since the America Prepared Campaign was formed, most of its work has been devoted to creating and disseminating messages aimed at encouraging Americans to take simple steps to lessen the damage to them and their families that might come from another terrorist attack. These preparations include having a “ready kit” of basic supplies (water, food, flashlights, batteries, a portable radio, dust masks, etc.); establishing a communications plan so that family members can contact each other in the event of an emergency; and learning a few of the basics of protection (such as the difference in dealing with chemical versus biological attacks). Although the America Prepared effort to persuade Americans to pay attention to the threat without scaring them or otherwise turning them off has been challenging, little of it has been controversial. We suspect, however, that what follows will be.

So why has America Prepared published this Report on School Preparedness that presumes to grade the country’s 20 largest school systems and charges that some of them are failing? Put simply, terrorism preparedness in schools is the one area where the cause has much less to do with citizens voluntarily taking responsibility for themselves and their children than it has to do with the government – in this case, our local governments and their school systems – doing its job. During the school day, governments – accountable public officials – are responsible for the safety of our children. Their work is not voluntary.

Consider, for example, the anomaly of the Department of Homeland Security’s [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) website urging Americans to stock “ready kits” of basic supplies in their homes (a recommendation echoed in various local government preparedness websites). Here the government has to persuade. But when it comes to the place that is “home” for children five days a week – our schools, which are run by government – government could practice what it preaches by stocking the same supplies. Yet in too many schools there are no such emergency supplies.

Especially in light of the conclusions of the 9/11 Commission, it benefits none of us if we mince words about how the nation’s school officials are fulfilling, or not fulfilling, their responsibility to protect our children from another terrorist attack. Those who are doing well deserve high praise and should have their work held up as a model. Those who are failing

should be embarrassed into improving, and as the conclusions of the 9/11 Commission made clear, embarrassed out of claiming a lack of resources or time or other priorities as excuses for not acting.

The standards by which they should be evaluated are clear. In May 2003, the Department of Education released *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide For Schools and Communities*.<sup>\*</sup> It recommends the steps that all school districts should take to ensure that they are prepared for natural disasters and terrorism, among other crises. Thus, America Prepared decided to see how the largest 20 school districts across the contiguous United States have done in responding to these clear recommendations. We found a wide range of performance. But generally we found that these large school systems need to do more, often much more.

At one end of the spectrum, there is Fairfax, Virginia. As perhaps the best prepared school district in the country, Fairfax County Public Schools has a comprehensive emergency management plan that deals directly with terrorist threats. Principals and administrators throughout the system train on that plan and members of the school community drill regularly. The district communicates extensively with parents, and translates its materials into six different languages, and makes all materials available online.<sup>†</sup> Apparently as a result of these efforts, in an Aug. 2004 poll conducted for us by the Luntz Research Groups, 75 percent of parents in Fairfax reported that they were aware of their school's emergency plan to deal with a terrorist attack or major natural disaster. Approximately 50 percent of parents reported that they knew what the plan said about shelter-in-place procedures in their child's school and 45 percent of parents reported knowing how to reunite with their children if they were evacuated from school.<sup>‡</sup>

And then there is Chicago Public Schools, which presents a picture of failure in every area where Fairfax is succeeding. Andres Durbak, the Chicago school system's director of Safety and Security estimates that 25 to 50 percent of the city's schools do not have satisfactory emergency plans, let alone practice them or communicate them to parents.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup> Herein referred to as the Department of Education *Guide*.

<sup>†</sup> Fairfax School District translates its emergency information into Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Urdu, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

<sup>‡</sup>For complete polling results, see Appendix C.

To be sure, many factors apart from the work of school district officials contribute to school preparedness. Parental involvement, funding, the size of the district, and the resolve of individual administrators all contribute to the preparedness of the nation's schools. But that does not mean that districts like Chicago or Detroit couldn't or shouldn't be doing much more.

In explaining the differences district by district, we hope that this report will help parents determine whether their own schools are prepared.

## II. TABLE OF FINDINGS

*A definition of each category can be found on page 9.*

<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>
Broward County Public Schools	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Chicago Public Schools	FAILING
Clark County School District	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Dallas Independent School District	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Detroit Public Schools	FAILING
Duval County Public Schools	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Fairfax County Public Schools	BEST
Gwinnett County Public Schools	GOOD
School District of Hillsborough County	GOOD
Houston Independent School District	GOOD
Los Angeles Unified School District	GOOD
Memphis City Schools	GOOD
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	GOOD
Montgomery County Public Schools	BEST
New York City Public Schools	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Orange County Public Schools	UNABLE TO BE CATEGORIZED
School District of Palm Beach County	BEST
School District of Philadelphia	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Prince George's County Public Schools	GOOD
San Diego City School District	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

### III: THE GUIDE

The Department of Education *Guide* divides crisis planning into four sections: mitigation & prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. America Prepared focused its study on section two: preparedness.

The Department of Education defines the steps to prepare a school district:

- *Identify and involve stakeholders* including parents, emergency responders, and city and county emergency planners. Ask stakeholders to provide feedback on sections of the plan that pertain to them.
- *Consider existing efforts.* What plan already exists? Can your activities be limited to revising that plan?
- *Determine what crises the plan will address.* This includes an assessment of local hazards and national emergencies.
- *Define roles and responsibilities* and assign school staff to specific roles. Make sure there are back-ups for these roles.
- *Develop methods for communicating with the staff, students, families, and the media.*
- *Obtain necessary equipment and supplies.* Give master keys to emergency responders. Get phones or radios necessary for communication. Maintain a cache of first aid supplies including food and water for students and staff during the incident.
- *Prepare for immediate response* including plans to evacuate, reverse evacuate, shelter-in-place, and lockdown.
- *Create maps and facilities information,* including the location of utility shut-offs.
- *Develop accountability and student release procedures* and be sure to inform families of release procedures before a crisis occurs.
- *Practice.* Preparedness includes emergency drills and crisis exercises for staff, students and emergency responders.

#### IV. THIS REPORT

America Prepared organized the recommendations of the Department of Education into three categories: Planning, Drilling and Communicating.

*The Plan.* Each school and district should have a comprehensive plan that outlines how the district and school would respond to a terrorist attack or major natural disaster. Each school should have the necessary supplies, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security.<sup>§</sup>

*Drills.* Each school and district should conduct monthly drills of that plan. Districts should monitor that these drills happen.

*Communication.* Each school should communicate to parents the pertinent details of that plan and ask for their input. Parents should also know the procedure for reuniting with their children if they are evacuated from school.

*Our Work.* From June to Aug. 2004, a team of five researchers from America Prepared, supervised and supplemented by America Prepared Outreach Manager Allison Phinney, conducted interviews of administrators, principals, emergency management officials, community members, journalists, and parents from the 20 largest school districts in the contiguous United States. America Prepared examined each district's emergency plan. In the 11 districts where emergency drill records are a matter of public record, these were obtained and audited.

As a result, we were able to place each of the 20 districts into one of the four categories: Best, Good, Needs Improvement, and Failing. As in all such exercises, the decisions we made were in part subjective and in some ways more art than science. But more often than not the factual evidence was unambiguous and gives us great confidence that we have categorized each district appropriately.

To be in the "BEST" category, a school district had to have a comprehensive and sensible emergency plan that deals directly with terrorist threats, as well as have the necessary supplies on hand to respond. It had to have a record of regular drills of that plan and of communicating with parents effectively and regularly.

The schools in the "GOOD" category had to have made significant progress toward achieving the goal of preparedness while still needing some significant improvements. For

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<sup>§</sup>For the Department of Homeland Security recommendations visit: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

example, the district may have made sensible attempts to get information out but may not have translated enough of its materials into other languages used by families in the area, thereby limiting effective communication.

Districts that fall into the “NEEDS IMPROVEMENT” category were those found to require serious action in one or more area of planning, drilling or communication. For instance, the district may not have made any attempt to inform parents, or did not supply schools with necessary emergency items, such as back-up communications devices.

To fall into the final category—“FAILING”— the district must have performed unsatisfactorily in all three areas: planning, drilling and communication.

## V. THE DISTRICTS

The Puerto Rico Department of Education and the state-wide Hawaii Department of Education are among the nation's 20 largest school districts (according to number of students) at number three and number eight respectively. America Prepared, however, chose to examine only those districts in the continental United States.

### **Broward County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 244

Number of Students: 271,339

### **Preparedness Grade:       NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

While Broward County has a solid system for updating and maintaining school and district emergency plans, the district needs to make immediate improvements in drilling and communication with parents. In 2003, Broward County received a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Education through the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Discretionary Grant Program. Dr. Joseph Melita, executive director of the Special Investigative Unit (SIU), who was project director for the grant, said that the grant money gave SIU the opportunity to “accelerate” current initiatives.<sup>2</sup> Broward officials say they are in the process of rapidly upgrading their program. As it currently stands, the district needs to diversify its drills and communicate effectively with parents. The district must also put kits in schools that meet the recommendations for the supplies that the Department of Homeland Security urges citizens to have at home. (See [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)).

*The Plan.* The district distributes a safety manual to all schools for use as a resource guide when drafting their individual safety plans. The Special Investigative Unit keeps every school's plan on file online. Every school has a safety team – a core group of six to eight people with roles and responsibilities for responding to an emergency. Keith Bromery, director of Communications and Media Relations, said state and local authorities are given Broward's school plans, as well as layouts of each school. In addition to guiding the implementation of individual school's safety plan, the district has also established a standardized set of “Alert Level Procedures,” or actions for the district and schools to take that relate to each of the Security Levels established by the Department of Homeland Security, from green to red.<sup>3</sup> These actions can be viewed online.

According to the Special Investigative Unit's Melita, every safety team will have received training by Oct. 2004 on emergency topics such as establishing an incident command system, conducting site assessments, and responding to hazardous materials incidents. Safety teams must go through tabletop exercises as part of their training. As of Aug. 11, Melita estimated that about 100 schools' safety teams had already received training, leaving about 150 more to go.<sup>4</sup>

*Drills.* Melita said that all schools are required to practice 10 fire drills per year, as well as severe weather drills. Schools must report their drills to district authorities. Melita said that SIU is trying to get schools to practice more "drop drills" (lockdowns), and he estimates about half of the schools in the county have already done this. Theresa McCarthy, assistant principal of Bayview Elementary and Debra Johnson, assistant principal of Atlantic West Elementary said that they practiced "general evacuation drills" – drills in which students are moved to an off-campus location – at least once a year.<sup>5</sup> There is no procedure for shelter-in-place.

*Communication.* Melita maintained that it is the responsibility of individual schools to inform parents of their emergency procedures.<sup>6</sup> It was no surprise, then, that some schools are more proactive about communicating with parents than others. Christopher W. Carney, principal of Bennett Elementary School said his school does power point presentations for parents.<sup>7</sup> Principal Theresa McCarthy said her plan at Bayview Elementary School is accessible through the main office and the parent-student handbook.<sup>8</sup>

The district website suggests that the community keep informed during an emergency by following the local print and broadcast media, calling the district's "Rumor Control Hotline" and checking the website for updated information.

While the district has these post-emergency measures in place, it needs to do a better job of communicating with parents *before* an emergency strikes. School communication strategies need to be standardized so that every school in the district communicates effectively with parents.

## Chicago Public Schools

Number of Schools: 613

Number of Students: 434,419

### Preparedness Grade: **FAILING**

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) gets a failing grade when it comes to preparing its children for a terrorist attack. The district has taken many steps since Sept. 11, 2001 to get prepared but 25 percent of schools still do not have an emergency plan of any kind.<sup>9</sup> And, according to Andres Durbak, director of School Safety, another 50 percent of Chicago public school plans vary in, as he put it, “mediocrities.”<sup>10</sup> The district-wide *Emergency Management Plan Manual* does not adequately address terrorist threats including chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological incidents. This is the template from which schools derive their individual plans. Emergency preparedness drills are not reported to the district. The district has not provided for back-up communication. Parents are poorly informed, as demonstrated by the America Prepared poll conducted in Aug. 2004. Our interviews indicate that many of the schools appear not to have any of the emergency supplies that the federal Department of Homeland Security and even the City of Chicago’s own website urge families to have at home in a “ready kit,” despite the obvious fact that during every school day, the district’s schools are “home” for over 400,000 children.

*The Plan.* The Chicago *Emergency Management Plan Manual* is similar to the plans of other districts around the country. It does not, however, adequately address terrorist threats. Its discussion of biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological threats is limited to a two page section on “Hazardous Materials,” which the section states “could result from industrial or transportation activities in the community. Minimizing the spread of the chemical agent within the school building is vital.”<sup>11</sup> It is evident that this plan was developed in order to address a problem of mercury spills in Chicago public schools. According to a Feb. 2003 press release from Chicago Public Schools, there were three separate mercury spills due to broken mercury thermometers in the district in fall 2003. The district reports that mercury spills cost “an average” of \$44,000 to clean up.<sup>12</sup>

Safety Director Durbak said that the district has a three-tiered system of emergency planning. First, there is a “Safe School Plan” that is designed to address the “everyday preparedness of the school.”<sup>13</sup> Durbak said the plan was originally issued in Jan. 2000 and the “basic concept” hasn’t changed since then. Durbak said that it “was an ongoing

struggle” to get every school to complete the safe school plan but that in the four years since the plan was released, close to 90 percent have completed this day-to-day plan.

The second tier of the district-wide plan, Durbak said, is the *Emergency Management Plan* to deal with crises as they occur. Durbak said that 75 percent of Chicago public schools have the *Emergency Management Plan* and that “now we’re going to get into the new school year where I have to have them rushing these plans to reevaluate them.”<sup>14</sup>

Of the *Emergency Management Plan*, which deals with community emergencies and is the only type of plan that Chicago public schools develop to deal with terrorism, Durbak said that 25 percent of the plans in the schools were not in plan format. Another 25 percent, Durbak said, were so good “you can publish them.” The final 50 percent “varies in mediocrities.”<sup>15</sup>

In fact, in the two interviews that America Prepared conducted with Durbak – one by phone and one in person at CPS headquarters – it became clear that the main problem in Chicago is that Durbak lacks the authority to enforce regulations. When asked why some schools had not even finished their emergency plan (Safe School Plan) for day-to-day emergencies, Durbak replied, “Some principals are just stuck and stupid and have no reason for not developing an emergency plan.”<sup>16</sup>

Michael Connolly, principal of Arthur Canty High School and John Cook, assistant principal of Charles Wacker Elementary School said their plans did not address terrorism.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Dennis Cooney, the Chicago Police Department officer at John F. Kennedy High School, said, “We don’t talk about [biological, chemical, and nuclear issues] at the school level. The public school [district] has an emergency plan; the police department has its own plan. Whether or not they’re reconciled, I couldn’t tell you.”<sup>18</sup>

Coordination between the Police Department and John F. Kennedy High School seems typical in Chicago. It became evident in the second interview with Durbak that he did not have regular contact with his counterparts at the Police or Fire Departments. Asked to name the contact with whom he worked in the Chicago Fire or Police Departments, Durbak replied, “There is no one person. I would say in emergency preparedness the one person that I contact is the 911 center. If I could say that there is one person that I deal with, it’s in the 911 center.”<sup>19</sup> Durbak also could not name a contact at the Fire Department.

If Durbak – whom officials at the Mayor’s office and the Office of Emergency Management, described as the “most knowledgeable” in terms of Chicago public school

emergency preparedness – cannot name a counterpart at the Police or Fire Departments, it is a clear indication that they do not work together on a regular basis.

In fact, the Chicago school system seems detached from City of Chicago emergency planning as a whole. Durbak said that he received the City of Chicago Master Plan in July 2004 and that on Aug. 4 he had a meeting to become a part of it.

“Just a couple of months ago the City published their plan,” Durbak said. “In other words, they put out the plan and then they told all the other agencies in the city, ‘Okay, now you formulate a plan to fit this.’”

Theodore Chung, deputy chief of staff in the Mayor’s office, told us that Durbak was “the most knowledgeable” about the state of preparedness in Chicago schools and that he did not “know how much contact the Mayor’s office has with CPS.”<sup>20</sup> Chung said, however, that Chicago “was way out in front in terms of a city-wide program” but acknowledged that “CPS involvement in the plan is fairly recent.”<sup>21</sup>

Asked about how much training he has been involved in with City officials to implement the city-wide plan, Durbak responded, “There has been no training. We’ve had meetings.”

The district’s *Emergency Management Plan* states that schools were provided with an array of supplies including first-aid supplies, whistles, rubber gloves, and face masks.<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Schachter, managing deputy director, Chicago Office of Emergency Management told us that CPS plans to supply “flashlights, name tags, pens, first-aid supplies, whistles, bullhorns, rubber gloves, face masks, additional supplies.... Many schools,” he added, “have ‘kits’ in place.”<sup>23</sup>

In fact, Chicago Public Schools seems to have failed to meet many of these requirements. Betty Carlvn, principal of Dewey Academy of Fine Arts, said that she did not send home information to parents, because mailing is too expensive and “you don’t necessarily have correct addresses.”<sup>24</sup> Carlvn also said that she had no special supplies in the school because they were not recommended by district officials. John Cook, assistant principal at the Charles Wacker Elementary School said that they did not have emergency kits.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, of the 16 interviews that America Prepared conducted with in-school personnel (including principals, assistant principals, and a resource officer) no one confirmed the existence of a kit that meets that description.

*Drills.* Schachter, of Chicago’s Office of Emergency Management, acknowledged that while Chicago public schools are required to conduct major emergency drills two times

a year and to conduct monthly tornado and fire drills, CPS monitoring and tracking of that activity is “currently not done.”<sup>26</sup> Consistently, however, the principals that America Prepared interviewed said that they had regular fire drills. In fact, Principal Calvin of Dewey Academy said that the fire department was “annoyingly” diligent about fire drills.<sup>27</sup>

It appears, however, that Chicago public schools limit their drilling to fire. Roosevelt Jones, assistant principal at Von Steuben High School said “As far as other types of drills, we haven’t had the need.”<sup>28</sup>

*Communication.* A look at the Chicago Public Schools website ([www.cps.k12.il.us](http://www.cps.k12.il.us)) helps explain why only 41 percent of parents surveyed in Aug. 2004 even think that their school has an emergency plan for a terrorist attack or major natural disaster. Unlike other districts where parents can get emergency preparedness information in several languages, as of Aug. 22, Chicago Public Schools provides no readily available information for parents on its website on any kind of emergency, including terrorism.

As of Aug. 22, if a parent were to type “terrorism” under the search option, he or she would get 11 results. The first listing of these results is *Remembering 9/11: Resources for CPS Students, Teachers, Administrators and Parents* which was posted on March 11, 2004 and is a listing of web resources including the “Rolling Requiem” of Mozart music to “commemorate those lost last September 11.”<sup>29</sup> America Prepared visited each of the links listed; none dealt with preparedness. Another listing was a press release entitled “CPS Bolsters Support for Schools to Help Address Issues Surrounding War with Iraq.” According to the release, “The CPS Bureau of Safety and Security sent updated emergency procedure information, which addresses bioterrorism and other terrorist incidents, to all schools in late February. Schools, in turn, submitted revised “Safe School Plans” to the bureau to document their emergency preparedness.”<sup>30</sup> This was the only press release on the CPS website that dealt with preparedness.

A search using the words “emergency preparedness” yielded similar results. The only way that parents can find information about the district’s emergency plans is by going to the side bar option “CPS Departments” and selecting “Safety and Security” on that separate page. Under the biography of Andres Durbak, director of Safety and Security, there is a link to the *Emergency Management Plan*. That manual is the template for individual schools in Chicago and does not list specific information for parents.

## Clark County School District

Number of Schools: 289

Number of Students: 268,357

### Preparedness Grade: **NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

Clark County has taken many important steps to being prepared, but there is more that the district needs to do to be ready. The district is not communicating effectively with parents as indicated by the Aug. 2004 America Prepared poll that showed that less than 50 percent of parents thought that their school had an emergency plan and only 25 percent knew the process for reunifying with their children if they were evacuated from school. While day-to-day events in Clark County public schools lead administrators and teachers to implement emergency plans, not all schools submit their plans to the district, despite requirements to do so. Clark County has video instruction for principals on emergency preparedness and provides teachers with a flip chart for site and district-wide instruction on emergency response, yet the principals we interviewed complained that the training is inadequate.

*The Plan.* The district-wide plan covers both major natural disasters and terrorist threats. There is specific information on chemical and biological threats and it instructs administrators on how to prepare for a wide array of emergencies.

Each teacher and administrator is provided with a flip chart that covers topics such as aircraft accidents, toxic emissions, and biological chemical threats. It instructs teachers and administrators how to shelter-in-place and even has blank areas for teachers to fill-in with school specific information.

Clark County administrators are still working to make sure that each school has submitted a plan to the district. Douglas Wilson, who has been principal of Hollingsworth Elementary for the last six years, said that he did not submit his plan to the district and “never had my supervisors ask to see any of those plans.”<sup>31</sup> Wilson said, however, that he had materials to shelter-in-place in each classroom including heavy, vinyl tape.

*Drills.* David Broxterman, administrative manager and James Artis, manager for Information Services, said that each month the fire department inspects school fire drills to confirm that they are being conducted. There are several other indicators that Clark County Schools conduct drills of their emergency plans on a regular basis. For one, as a result of external violence in the community, students have participated in actual lockdown

scenarios. Dr. Bradley Reitz, assistant superintendent in the Student Support Services Division, estimated that elementary schools engage in two to four actual lockdowns each month because of community violence.<sup>32</sup>

Chief Elliot Phelps of the Clark County School District Police reported that he worked closely with the schools mostly because of high community violence.<sup>33</sup> Phelps also said that there are supplies for shelter-in-place drills in each school.

“Clark is not as prepared as we can be but we are moving quickly to reach that level,” Phelps said. “The reason for not being at the optimal level is the lack of drills.”

*Communication.* In the Aug. 2004 poll conducted by America Prepared, only 47 percent of parents said that their child’s school has an emergency plan to deal with a terrorist attack or major natural disaster. Only 33 percent knew the details of where their children would shelter and only 25 percent of parents knew how they would reunite with their children if they were evacuated from school.\*\*

Clark County is not doing a good job of disseminating information. Its website does not address emergency preparedness. It is up to individual schools to communicate with the parents about emergency plans and they have done so inconsistently.

The problem with parent communication in Clark is much broader than just emergency preparedness. “It is difficult for us to communicate with parents,” said Douglas Wilson, principal of Hollingsworth Elementary School.<sup>34</sup> “There are not a lot of phones in the homes.” Wilson added as additional evidence of his district’s difficult demographics, that over 85 percent of his students are eligible for a free lunch and 10 percent of the children are homeless.

### **Dallas Independent School District**

Number of Schools: 218

Number of Students: 161,261

**Preparedness Grade:       NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

Dallas Independent School District, while not fully prepared for a terrorist attack, has all the programs in place to become well prepared. Dallas has a comprehensive emergency plan but its handbook is not easy to read. It supports and enforces drilling, and

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\*\*For complete polling results, see Appendix C.

communicates with parents, though not enough. Jerry Wallace, director of Safety Education and Crisis Prevention for the district said that schools do not have emergency kits but said that he requested that schools put one together.<sup>35</sup>

*The Plan.* In addition to the *Emergency Handbook: Crisis Management Plan* -- which exhaustively covers every type of crisis from natural disasters to terrorism, substance abuse to suicide -- the Dallas Independent School District provides schools with a *Safe School Handbook*, which is a tabbed, concise book on a variety of emergencies including terrorism. The handbook is not easy-to-read but a thorough examination of its topics would be useful to teachers and administrators. In addition to these materials, the district provides schools with a resource manual with ample worksheets for preparing for an attack including useful templates for developing a crisis team.

The *Local Safety and Crisis Plan*, which all schools are required to complete, is a series of easy-to-follow templates for preparing a school-level emergency plan. The district also provides schools with a timeline of “critical program requirements.”<sup>36</sup> For 2004-2005, for instance, schools are required to “post emergency procedures, including floor plans with evacuation routes” by Aug. 13. Schools are required to provide training to crisis teams and hold a public meeting for parents and community stakeholders by Sept. 30.

Seaborn Philips, assistant principal of Roosevelt High School, faxed a copy of his crisis plan to America Prepared. While it designated individuals on the “Crisis Team” and addressed procedures for school shootings and bomb threats, it was little more than five pages of notes.

*Drills.* The district needs to standardize its drilling procedures and improve how it addresses fire code violations, which Wallace said are “still a big issue.”<sup>37</sup> In an Aug. 21, 2003 memo to all school principals, Wallace instructed schools to conduct one to two fire drills per month depending on the age of the students.<sup>38</sup> According to the memo, schools must keep copies of records for three years. A request by America Prepared for copies of these records confirmed that the district maintains records of these drills.

*Communication.* Despite these successes in drilling and planning, the Dallas Independent School District is failing when it comes to parent communication. Donovan Collins, executive director of Safety and Security for the District said that emergency preparedness information is included in the student handbook, but an America Prepared review of these materials revealed that the information was superficial at best.<sup>39</sup> Seaborn

Phillips, assistant principal at Roosevelt High School said that the details of his plan had not been discussed with parents.<sup>40</sup>

### **Detroit Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 256

Number of Students: 157,631

### **Preparedness Grade:        FAILING**

Detroit Public Schools (DPS) is failing when it comes to preparing its schools for terrorism. Neither the district's *Safety and Security Plan* nor the *Detroit Public Schools Crisis Response Handbook* adequately covers terrorist threats. Not much has changed since a *Detroit News Report* in March 2003 that "one in five Michigan schools has no safety plan for dealing with bomb scares, hostage situations, shootings and other critical incidents."<sup>41</sup> Charles Mitchell, chief of Detroit Public School Safety told us that only 25 percent of Detroit schools are prepared for a terrorist attack.<sup>42</sup>

The district does not monitor individual school plans and does not enforce regulations. According to Mitchell, schools do not have the necessary emergency supplies, let alone kits that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security.<sup>43</sup> It is unclear whether or not Detroit public schools are performing regular fire drills, let alone other emergency drills. There is poor interagency communication, although the Red Cross of Detroit helps by assisting schools with their planning. Finally, as indicated by an Aug. 2004 America Prepared poll, Detroit is not effectively communicating with parents.

*The Plan.* The district publishes both the *Detroit Public Schools Crisis Response Handbook* (printed in April, 2002) and the district's *Safety and Security Plan*. The latter is distributed to schools as a reference for drafting and reviewing school safety plans. The *Handbook*, which is self-described as a "quick response guide," mandates that every school designate a Crisis Team, and states that members of the team should each be equipped with their own copy of the *Handbook*. Based on the content of the *Handbook*, the breadth of DPS' emergency planning is limited: only nine categories of emergencies are addressed including "fire/explosion," "bomb threat," and "suspicious packages," with no mention of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear emergencies. The closest thing to this would be the section on "Environmental Emergency: Gas and Hazardous Material Spills," which offers limited instructions and makes no mention of shelter-in-place procedures.

The district's *Safety and Security Plan* was written by the Office of Risk Management in conjunction with the consulting firm Marsh USA, Inc. in Nov. 2002. Safety Chief Mitchell said the district also worked with the Michigan Homeland Security Department to write the plan. According to Stephen A. Hill, executive director of the Office of Risk Management, the first stage of this planning is the risk assessments including chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological threats.

"I have a breakdown of all the hazardous material sites and how close they are to the schools," Hill said. "We looked at the proximity of our schools to major thoroughfares. Soon we'll be able to provide that information to the schools."<sup>44</sup>

In fact, beyond providing teachers with the *Emergency and Safety Procedures Guide* flipchart that outlines responses to the Department of Homeland Security's threat level system and suspicious packages, the district has done little to get Detroit public schools prepared, and the schools have not responded even to these efforts.

"Marsh consulting firm is putting together this big plan. I think what's happening is that they're not drilling each school," said Harold Watkins, Office of Emergency Management, Detroit Fire Department. "They need to do one drill with a school in each constellation."<sup>45</sup>

Owen Ahern, manager of safety and loss control in the district's Office of Risk Management, said that the district has a Critical Response Team, whose members check crisis manuals in the schools and conduct monthly meetings with principals.<sup>46</sup> Stanley Waldon, principal of Academy of Fine & Performing Arts, an elementary school, said that his plan had not changed since 9/11, and that the focus of the plan is on internal situations and hostages.<sup>47</sup> Waldon said that no one from the district has come to his school to check on the plan and that he was unsure if local authorities had copies of the plan and blueprints. Shirley Hightower, principal of Chadsey High School said that despite the memos she has received from the district regarding mail and bomb threats, these situations have not been written into the plan, and that the plan is not multi-hazard.<sup>48</sup> Like the district plan, Hightower's school plan, is primarily limited to the day-to-day emergencies of a public school, such as school shootings. Freda Dawson, principal of Malcolm X Academy, said that her plan has changed since 9/11 and now includes lockdown and shelter-in-place procedures but that the district does not conduct an audit of school plans or threat assessments.<sup>49</sup>

John DeLora, training and development coordinator for the district's Department of Public Safety, said that his department lacks the authority to make principals comply, and while he has tracked the schools that have sent in their plans, some do not send in any plans at all.<sup>50</sup>

The problem in Detroit is two fold – the district is short-handed and lacking funds, and district administrators need to take the lead in emergency preparedness.

"We need the CEO to get up in a meeting with all the principals and say, 'We shall do this,'" said the Fire Department's Watkins. "They're busy. They have too much stuff to do. They're under budget, under paid, all that kind of stuff."<sup>51</sup>

In fact, Detroit Public Schools laid off 200 of its 500 security officers in 2004.

*Drills.* While Hill of the Office of Risk Management said that he challenges the notion that schools are not performing regular fire drills, Watkins of the Office of Emergency Management in the Fire Department said "I can tell you off the top of my head they don't do them."<sup>52</sup>

Similarly, DeLora, who runs training and development for DPS, said that schools are required to have 10 fire drills per year, but that there is no mechanism in place to verify that those drills are done.<sup>53</sup>

Each of the six principals confirmed that they performed some number of fire drills each year. Two principals said they had shelter-in-place and disaster drills. Though there is a modified version of lockdown instructions in the district *Handbook*, no one mentioned lockdown drills.

*Communication.* Some efforts have been made to communicate school emergency plans to parents and there are copies of both the classroom flip-charts and the *Detroit Public Schools Crisis Response Handbook* on the district's website. Last year's *DPS Parent Handbook* made no mention of emergency planning other than what parents should do in the event of early closings due to inclement weather.

Ahern of the Office of Risk Management said a significant amount of information has been presented to parents and the community, adding that he has attended parent advocacy meetings, sent out letters, and even conducted radio interviews about emergency preparedness over the last two years.<sup>54</sup>

In any case, the message is not getting through to parents. In an Aug. 2004 poll conducted by America Prepared, only 27.5 percent of parents reported knowing how they would reunite with their children if they were evacuated from school.<sup>††</sup>

### **Duval County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 178

Number of Students: 127,989

#### **Preparedness Grade:       NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

Duval's emergency plan only addresses a limited number of emergencies and though the district plans to monitor individual school plans starting this year, no review of plans is currently in place. Many of the procedures that Duval has in place to respond to other emergencies could be used to respond to many terrorist threats, but the district needs to make specific plans for terrorism. Duval monitors emergency drills, including both fire and inclement weather drills but it does not communicate effectively and consistently with parents. The district must also maintain kits in schools that meet the recommendations that the Department of Homeland Security.

*The Plan.* The district's *Comprehensive Risk Management Plan* is distributed to schools as a template. The plan outlines procedures for "code yellow" and "code red" situations – which are similar to lockdowns of varying intensity – but addresses only a limited number of emergencies including bomb threats, stranger on campus, food borne illnesses, hazardous substances and an array of weather emergencies. The plan does not specifically address terrorism.

"[There is] nothing specifically where we say 'terrorist,' but there are many emergencies that could be terrorist acts that we plan for – intruder, bomb threat, suspicious package, etc," said Robert Stratton, coordinator of the School Safety Office. "There are two basic things you need to consider for any emergency: whether you are going to get everyone inside, or evacuate."<sup>55</sup>

In fact, the district seemed unaware of the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security. Levi McIntosh, a regional superintendent for Duval County Public

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<sup>††</sup>For complete polling results, see Appendix C.

Schools, did not know what shelter-in-place was.<sup>56</sup> McIntosh also did not know how to prepare for radiological, nuclear or bioterrorist attacks.

According to Safety Director Stratton, the district does not require schools to conduct threat assessments. He said that schools have evacuation buckets, which the district sends out to them (empty) with file folders, and the schools are supposed to store student and teacher rosters, diagrams of the schools, basic first-aid supplies, flashlights and other emergency equipment in the buckets. Stratton said that all schools are equipped with a weather radio, which can also serve as an emergency broadcast radio. The kits do not however meet the any of requirements for kits outlined on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

The district does not keep track of schools' individual emergency plans, Stratton said, but it will begin checking for them during routine annual inspections this year.<sup>57</sup> Administrators and teachers have their own flipcharts and they also carry "code yellow/code red" cards, which outline basic instructions for these drills. Each of the seven principals randomly interviewed by America Prepared, however, confirmed that their school had an emergency plan. As if it were scripted, every principal said that his or her plan was updated "at least" annually. Principals were asked if he or she knew what to do in the event of a terrorist attack and responded that he or she would go into "code red" – lockdown – and look for guidance from the district.

*Drills.* Stratton, the safety coordinator for the district, said monthly fire drills and at least one tornado drill per year are required. Each of the principals interviewed confirmed that they performed these drills, which are also reported to the Florida Fire Marshal's office. Stratton said schools have to report the results of their drills to his office every month.

While "code yellow/code red" procedures are outlined in the *Comprehensive Risk Management Plan*, no drills for them are required. Crystal Lewis, principal of Biscayne Elementary School said that she performed a complete campus evacuation drill once a year, though it is not required by the district.<sup>58</sup>

Stratton said that the district did not do shelter-in-place drills with duct tape and plastic sheeting because "he's been told it's a waste of time...some tell you taping up porous windows for chemicals will do no good, especially for these older buildings."<sup>59</sup>

*Communication.* Administrators and school personnel do not communicate emergency plans to parents, and they do not think that they should share the entire plan. While Duval County PTA/PTSA President Reta Russell-Houghton maintains that the district has done a good job of keeping parents informed, both by participating in PTA meetings

and by sending information home to parents directly, neither School Police Chief Michael Herrington nor Safety Coordinator Robert Stratton could say whether parents are aware of the emergency communication system in place.

“We don’t have a vehicle that I know of to tell the parents of 130,000 students in this district that this is what’s going to happen in an individual school, at any given time,” said Police Chief Herrington.<sup>60</sup>

Of the seven in-school personnel interviewed, no one could give a substantive answer for how parents are informed of their emergency procedures.

### **Fairfax County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 241

Number of Students: 166,601

**Preparedness Grade: BEST**

Fairfax County Public Schools, along with Montgomery County Public Schools, is clearly the most prepared district of the 20 largest school districts in the country. It has an exhaustive emergency plan and each school in the district has a site specific plan. Principals in the district confirmed that they have some of the supplies recommended by the Department of Homeland Security, including kits with flashlights and first aid kits. Parents are active in emergency planning, contributing supplies to the school. An Aug. 2004 America Prepared poll confirmed that 75 percent of parents reported knowing that their school had a plan and about half could recount the details of that plan, including reunification and shelter-in-place procedures. Parents are active in the Fairfax school system, which is one reason for their overwhelming success at getting prepared. Another may be that Fairfax is the second wealthiest district in the United States according to household income. It is a featured link on the Department of Education emergency planning website ([www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)) along with the North Carolina School System and Montgomery County.

*The Plan.* The Fairfax plan is easy-to-read and has sensible templates for schools. It provides communication templates to teachers and principals and defines key roles for emergency response personnel. It provides response actions for terrorist emergencies such as bomb threats, chemical and biohazard emergencies, gas or odor concerns, and hostage situations.

Fairfax's plan predates the Department of Education *Guide*, said Fred Ellis, director of the Office of Safety and Security. "In fact, they based their plans on ours and took from ours," he said. "We are cited as a model by DHS and DOE."<sup>61</sup>

Principals use the district-wide plan as a template to create a school-specific plan. Each of the nine principals randomly interviewed by America Prepared confirmed that he or she had a plan in his or her school and that the District reviewed that plan regularly.

"We do a lot of upfront planning, so we're not reactive," said Susan Fitz, principal of Bren Mar Park Elementary School. "We're proactive."<sup>62</sup>

Schools have supplies that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security, though they do not necessarily have all of those supplies. Dale Rumberger, principal of Westfield High School, said that though they have plastic sheeting and duct tape for the 77 entrances, they decided not to have sheeting and tape for every classroom.<sup>63</sup> The district does not require schools to have duct tape and plastic sheeting. Lynn Terhar, president of the Fairfax County Council of PTAs, said that a parent brought up the idea of storing three gallons of water in the school for each child, but they did the arithmetic and realized that it did not make sense.

Paul Regnier, coordinator of community relations, said that Fairfax's emergency preparedness system was "state of the art."

"One of the most important things is that we have a great relationship with our police department," Regnier said. "We have a police officer in every high school and every middle school."<sup>64</sup>

Principal Rumberger said that police sometimes conduct training in the school after hours to become familiar with the space.<sup>65</sup>

*Drills.* Fairfax County continually performs drills of its emergency plan. Principals interviewed by America Prepared confirmed regular fire and tornado drills. They do walk-throughs of shelter-in-place and lockdowns with the teachers and crisis teams (depending on school size), and they cycle through table top exercises with each of the nine school regions bi-annually.

Daniel Meier, principal of Robinson Secondary School said that they do table top procedures with police "at least once a year." Mark Glaser, president of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers said "We're good at locking down. Everyone has that one down pat."<sup>66</sup>

Principal Rumberger said that when he performs his drills, sometimes he throws in variables like a blocked exit. Rumberger also said that his preparation benefited from an exercise the district conducted with the county to walk through the inoculation of 92,000 people against small pox. The school is to be an inoculation center in the event of an emergency.<sup>67</sup>

*Communication.* Fairfax parents are involved in the school and the district communicates with the parents extensively about emergency preparedness in seven languages.

“There are information sessions with the Parents Teachers Association; the superintendent also has a community advisory council; and the newly formed Citizen Corps also gets the word out,” said Diane Brody, former president of the Fairfax County PTA. “People from the district went to meetings in every school cluster and spoke of emergency preparedness programs. I really think the information was out for anybody who wanted it.”<sup>68</sup>

Fairfax has an e-mail “keep-in-touch” system whereby parents can get messages from their school and the entire district in the event of an emergency. The Fairfax County website makes available comprehensive preparedness information in seven different languages (Arabic, English, Farsi, Korean, Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese) including specific information about what parents should do in an emergency.

### **Gwinnett County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 97

Number of Students: 124,655

#### **Preparedness Grade:      GOOD**

Gwinnett County Public Schools has strong district-wide and school specific plans including a system for reviewing those plans. The district conducts fire and severe weather drills and reports them to the State Fire Marshal. To be in the best category, the district needs to make mandatory the Gwinnett Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) list of supplies for schools and add to that list the items recommended by the Department of Homeland Security on its citizen preparedness site, [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Though it sends out some district-wide information, schools need to communicate more consistently with parents.

*The Plan.* Schools in Gwinnett design their emergency response plans based on a template provided by the district. A state law passed in 1999, requires all public schools to

formulate emergency plans in conjunction with community partners to address “natural disasters, hazardous materials or radiological accidents, acts of violence, and acts of terrorism;” and schools submit their plans to GEMA to approve and keep on record. The law also states that GEMA shall provide “training and technical assistance” to public school systems. GEMA monitors and approves school lists. According to its website ([www2.state.ga.us/GEMA](http://www2.state.ga.us/GEMA)), 90 of the 99 schools in Gwinnett County have plans that have been approved by the agency, in compliance with the bill. Seven of the schools that do not have a plan that meet that requirement are new. The Gwinnett County Public Schools website features a column written by the district’s superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks, in which he claims that Gwinnett’s plans “have been applauded by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency as among the best these experts have seen.”<sup>69</sup> In addition the system-wide *Crisis Management Manual* is sent out to all schools each year.

The district also requires each school to have a trained crisis response team. Christine Emsley, principal of Duncan Creek Elementary School, said that she had “emergency teams” at her school.<sup>70</sup> She also said that administrators received training two years ago. According to Frank Daniell, Gwinnett Emergency Management coordinator, schools are given a “generic list” of supplies that they should have on-hand in case of an emergency, such as records of student contact and medication information.<sup>71</sup> The items on that list, however, are not mandatory.

*Drills.* Fire and severe weather drills are state-mandated, according to GEMA School Safety Project Manager Steven Harris. He said schools practice monthly fire drills and that every school now has the option to do a severe weather drill in Nov. and/or Feb. in place of a requisite fire drill. The results of school drills are recorded on the State Fire Marshal’s website. While additional drills are not required, Harris said schools are becoming more aware of other emergency procedures. Principal Emsley of Duncan Creek Elementary School said her school practices lockdowns in addition to fire and tornado drills and each drill must be reported to the district.

*Communication.* The centerpiece of Gwinnett County Public Schools’ communications system is the newly created Emergency Operations Communications Center (EOCC), which opened in 2004. In the 2004 district Report to the Community, the center is described as a mechanism to “support schools and facilitate communication with parents, the news media, and community agencies in the event of a crisis.”<sup>72</sup> The idea for a center was conceived through “conversations with GEMA and county officials” and is said to

be much like the centers operated by other Gwinnett Fire and Police Departments.<sup>73</sup> There are also walkie-talkies and a separate phone line that is available for use by principals in the event of an emergency. Principal Emsley said there is information about the plan in her school's student handbook, which parents receive at the beginning of the year.

### **School District of Hillsborough County**

Number of Schools: 185

Number of Students: 180,416

**Preparedness Grade:                   GOOD**

The School District of Hillsborough County is well on its way to becoming one of the most prepared of the country's 20 largest school districts. The administrators are keenly aware of the need to be ready for all kinds of emergencies and have developed a comprehensive emergency plan. Awarded \$1 million from the Department of Education's "Emergency Response and Crisis Management Discretionary Grant Program," Superintendent Earl Lennard and Kenneth Otero, assistant superintendent for administration, said that they used part of that money to conduct a district-wide table-top exercise simulating a chemical release in the neighborhood.<sup>74</sup> Schools communicate with their parents about the need for emergency preparedness, but the supplies on hand at each school do not consistently meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined on its citizen preparedness website [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

*The Plan.* The School District of Hillsborough County emergency plan is comprehensive and easy-to-read. Administrators from the district would not provide America Prepared with a copy of the emergency plan citing security concerns but allowed us to view it at the district headquarters in Tampa. The two-volume plan covers everything from weather emergencies (such as hurricanes) to terrorist threats. It includes clear instructions for sheltering-in-place for chemical or radiological emergencies and even includes information on proper mail handling. The district has different preparations that correspond to each of the Department of Homeland Security's threat levels.

The district also provides teachers and principals with an "Emergency Action Checklist" flipchart, with easy-to-follow instructions on how to respond to every kind of emergency. There is even room for principals to attach the site specific plan for his or her school so that every teacher has a copy in the classroom.

Superintendent Lennard said that every school has an emergency weather radio system and battery back-up. Schools are also provided with Nextel walkie-talkie phones to communicate if utilities are disrupted. Each school, however, does not have a kit that meets the recommendations outlined by the Department of Homeland Security on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

*Drills.* Each of the 10 principals that America Prepared interviewed in Hillsborough confirmed that schools regularly drill for fire, severe weather and man-made emergencies, such as terrorist attacks. In Feb. 2004, however, Action News in Tampa reported that Hillsborough Schools had several fire code violations. If true, those violations could impede students' evacuation from school buildings. The violation most cited by Action News correspondent Mike Mason was inoperable fire alarms.

America Prepared examined the fire code violations for the 11 of the 20 districts across the country that are covered in this report and that were publicly available. We found that fire code violations in Hillsborough, as recorded on the State Fire Marshal website ([www.bebr.ufl.edu/firereport](http://www.bebr.ufl.edu/firereport)) are typical of the type and quantity of fire violations across Florida and around the country. What was atypical was the local news coverage of the fire code violations.

Superintendent Lennard explained Hillsborough County was the "lightning capital of the U.S." and that since fire alarms are electronic they are sometimes affected by strikes.

In July 2004, Hillsborough conducted a table top exercise with every principal and school safety team. America Prepared tried to conduct interviews with dozens of principals during this period and was consistently told by school office staff that the principal was at such an exercise. Superintendent Lennard said that the district will conduct a similar table top in October.

*Communication.* Hillsborough is doing a good job at communicating with its parents on emergency preparedness. Its website (<http://apps.sdhc.k12.fl.us.admindiv/>) reflects this. In addition to linking directly to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), the district includes hand-outs that schools have sent to parents.

The 2004-2005 student handbooks – distributed to students by each school and also available online – include information for both students and parents on locating emergency reunification sites and on comprehensive emergency plans.

"In the beginning of the year, we really blitz the parents with information about reunification sites and pick up procedures so we don't have parents coming to the school,

getting in the way of emergency vehicles,” said Jeffrey Eakins, principal of Cypress Creek Elementary School.<sup>75</sup>

In Feb. 2003, the district posted information online about its evacuation and shelter-in-place plans in the form of “Frequently Asked Questions for Parents.” Parents are told to tune into Bay News 9 and News Radio 970 WFLA-AM for information during an emergency.

Hillsborough does not share the entire emergency plan with parents. David Friedberg, chief of Security Services, said that Hillsborough goes to great lengths to protect the contents of much of the plan for security reasons.<sup>76</sup> The contents of the emergency plan of an individual school are exempt from the *Public Record Florida Statute 119.07*, and administrators work to keep the contents from the public. They do, however, share information about parent-child reunification with the public.

### **Houston Independent School District**

Number of Schools: 307

Number of Students: 211,499

#### **Preparedness Grade:      GOOD**

The Houston Independent School District is well on its way to being fully prepared for a terrorist attack. The district has a comprehensive district-wide plan and independent school plans are reported back to the district. Drills are conducted regularly and are recorded but do not include terrorist specific or table-top drills. Schools do not have kits that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). In addition to diversifying its drills and providing these kits, the district needs to do a better job of communicating with parents in order to be fully prepared.

*The Plan.* Houston Independent School District provides all schools with its *Emergency Preparedness Plan Manual*, and each school must tailor their plan to meet its specific needs. The plan, which covers terrorist threats and appropriate response procedures, such as shelter-in-place, is also posted online. School Police Chief John B. Blackburn said an outside company devised the district’s template.<sup>77</sup>

Individual school plans are then sent back to the district. The district has an “Alert E-mail System” in place to alert principals and work supervisors of emergency situations and/or changes in the national security alert levels. The district equips principals and assistant principals with a self-explanatory manual that outlines all of the emergency procedures, and uses flowcharts for training with other school personnel.

*Drills.* Assistant Superintendent Hilbert Bludau said the only emergency drill the district requires is the monthly fire drill. However, he said that schools also practice shelter-in-place drills.<sup>78</sup> Bludau said that some schools practice a mock evacuation drill, or a tabletop exercise, in which school administrators talk through the steps of their evacuation plans for different scenarios. Based on our interviews with local school personnel, drilling practices vary from school to school: of the six interviewed, all said they practiced fire drills, five said shelter-in-place, four mentioned tornado or severe weather drills, and two said they practiced lockdowns.

*Communication.* The district has made a strong effort to communicate its emergency procedures to the community at large, including parents. On March 3, 2003 Superintendent Kaye Stripling sent a letter home to parents discussing emergency preparedness and shelter-in-place. This letter was translated into three different languages. On the District's website, there is a clear side bar link for "emergency preparedness" and a detailed set of instructions for principals and work location supervisors to follow according to different national security alert levels. There is a set of instructions for principals and teachers on implementing shelter-in-place.

However, schools vary in their efforts to communicate emergency information to parents. Of the school personnel interviewed, four said the plan is shared through the student handbook, three said they also mailed letters or newsletters home, and Principal Adele Rogers of Holland Middle School said her school sends the entire plan home to parents.<sup>79</sup>

### **Los Angeles Unified School District**

Number of Schools: 850

Number of Students: 746,610

#### **Preparedness Grade:      GOOD**

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has a strong emergency preparedness infrastructure in place and is close to being in the "BEST" category. It should translate all of its materials into Spanish so that it communicates effectively with parents. It has a comprehensive plan that directly addresses terrorist threats. The district supplies schools with some emergency supplies though not all the supplies recommended by the Department of Homeland Security. The district monitors monthly fire drills and two annual earthquake drills. Communication with parents is inconsistent between schools but the

district website has easy-to-find emergency preparedness information posted including the district plan.

*The Plan.* LAUSD has an extensive and sensible emergency plan (*Model Safe School Plan, Volume 2 – Emergency Procedures*) that was developed for schools to use as a template. The district's Director of Emergency Services, Robert Spears, estimates that between 95 and 99 percent of the schools have submitted their most recent plans to his office, adding that schools are required to give their updated plans to the district every year.<sup>80</sup> The plan, posted online, addresses 18 kinds of emergencies, including: aircraft crashes, armed assaults on campus, biological or chemical releases, bomb threats, earthquakes, explosions/risk of explosions, and suspected contaminations of food or water. Schools should have emergency response teams with specific roles and responsibilities, ranging from an incident command team to a fire suppression and hazardous materials team.

Since 2001, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) has performed routine health and safety inspections, which include assessments of school emergency preparedness and Safe School Plans. After these assessments, schools are scored and the OEHS maintains a record of the school's progress.

According to Spears, authorities are given a computer disk with school layouts, which indicate the location of supplies, a map, and evacuation sites. All schools are equipped with large supply bins (20x40 feet) containing food, water, and other basic emergency supplies needed for up to three days of being sheltered in. District Director of Environmental Health and Safety, Angelo Bellomo said the district is collaborating with city, county, and federal agencies to prepare for terrorism.<sup>81</sup>

"Our next effort will be to increase the response capabilities of all the centralized support organizations in the district, such as this office (Environmental Health & Safety), the school police, etc." Bellomo said. "Just as we worked to get 900 plans for the schools, we now need a single plan for how the district will respond as a whole to a multi-school incident."<sup>82</sup>

*Drills.* Two earthquake drills per year and monthly fire drills are required across the district. Schools must report the results of their earthquake drills to the district and keep their own records of fire and any other drills they practice. The district template outlines the procedures for duck and cover, shelter-in-place, lockdown, building evacuation, and off-site evacuation, but only earthquake and fire drills are required.

*Communication.* The district has an open approach to sharing information with parents.

“They should know everything,” said Bellomo of the Environmental Health and Safety Office. “There is no question, if it’s done right, that parents should be very familiar with how to respond in an emergency.”

The district posts information about emergency preparedness online, including a copy of the district template and the results of OEHS’ routine health and safety inspections for each school. The *Safe School Plan* is mentioned in the parent-student handbook, and parents who want to learn more about it are directed to contact their school’s principal or a member of the School Safety Planning Committee, which reviews and updates the plan annually.

In the beginning of every school year, parents must fill out emergency contact cards, which remind parents that schools will retain students in the event of a major emergency. Every time there is a district-wide drill, parents receive a letter in the mail outlining and explaining the emergency procedures. Emergency Services Director Spears said that in an actual emergency, parents would be informed through the media (the district has its own television station) and via an automatic dialing system, which every school has. Martha Cardenas of the Parent Community Services Branch said that despite district requirements, not all schools have translated their letters into Spanish due to a lack of personnel and time.<sup>83</sup>

Los Angeles Unified could easily be one of the best prepared school districts in the country when it finishes its district-wide plan and all of its 900 schools finish their site specific plans, which district officials maintain that 95 percent of schools have done. Translating its information into Spanish will help the district communicate effectively with parents.

## Memphis City Schools

Number of Schools: 185

Number of Students: 118,000

### Preparedness Grade: **GOOD**

Memphis is making a serious effort to improve emergency preparedness, in part as result of a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Education. The school system has a solid plan template, and the district distributes a manual that directly addresses terrorist threats. Schools are required to have nine fire drills a year and each of the principals that we surveyed said that he or she performed these and additional drills. Two principals said that they had kits in their schools that were similar to kits recommended by the Department of Homeland Security. But kits that meet DHS recommendations, as outlined on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), are not mandatory. The emergency management plan, however, includes a form letter to be sent to parents to encourage them to send emergency supplies to their child's school. (See Appendix A for this letter). This is a good alternative for school systems trying to make kits on tight resources. Finally, Memphis City Schools is making great strides in parent communication. Memphis is holding a district-wide seminar for parents to be held on Sept. 8, 2004 to get parents to become part of their school's emergency response teams.

*The Plan. Creating the School-Centered Multi-Hazard Emergency Plan* is an easy-to-follow set of directions and templates. It instructs schools to form multi-hazard school teams and to identify potential risks, including chemical companies, trucks carrying hazardous materials, or an interstate highway in the vicinity. The plans are assessed by the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. Plans must be updated yearly, said Sam Moses, security coordinator for the district.<sup>84</sup> The template includes specific instructions for parent-child reunification procedures. There is a table for each school to record drills, including two fire drills in the first month of school and one each month following, two earthquake drills per year, two severe weather drills, including one that must occur in March, and other drills such as shelter-in-place drills.

Finally, the plan includes information for each school to create a kit of blueprints of the school, maps, flashlights, first-aid kits, two-way radios, battery-powered radio and spare batteries, and lists of important information. The district does not provide all of these materials, but schools are supposed to assemble them. Murphysteen Campbell, principal of

Alcy Elementary School said that community agencies helped the school assemble food and water kits in the classroom. Victoria Matthews principal at Coleman Elementary School said that her school had the bare essentials of flashlights and first aid kits but that the logistics of having water supplies for 700 students were too difficult, although she added that her school had warning radios and hand-held emergency lights.<sup>85</sup> Moses said that the district will use part of the grant money awarded by the Department of Education to buy weather disaster, battery-powered radios for all schools that could be used for backup communication in the event of an emergency.

*Drills.* Like most of the other districts, Memphis trains principals and relies on them to train their staffs. Security Coordinator Moses said that this training is required every year, which was confirmed by the principals that we interviewed. The district performs a variety of drills on a consistent basis including earthquake and severe weather drills but terrorist-related shelter-in-place drills are not required. These drills are reported to the district in the yearly report on emergency preparedness.

*Communication.* In 2003, Memphis City Schools did not effectively communicate with parents. The district-wide parent handbook for 2003-2004, which is translated into Spanish, did not contain emergency preparedness information.

The district will get off to a better start in 2004, however, with a seminar for parents with emergency management officials on Sept. 8. The district is using this session not only to tell parents how they can prepare their families at home for disasters but also to get them involved in school planning. For this action alone, the district should be commended for its emergency planning.

### **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 320

Number of Students: 369,578

#### **Preparedness Grade:      **GOOD****

Miami-Dade County Public Schools, while having a good district plan in place and solid drilling procedures, needs to improve its communication with parents and put kits in schools that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security (which can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)).

*The Plan.* The district sends a *Critical Incident Response Plan* to all of its schools and each school in turn tailors the plan to meet their specific needs. The *Plan* covers all

incidents, such as hurricanes and chemical disasters.<sup>86</sup> The district lists its Emergency Management Procedures online ([www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net)) covering topics such as natural disasters, nuclear fall-out and food-borne illness.<sup>87</sup> The district also distributes the “Homeland Security and Recommended Actions for our Schools” manual to each school, requiring every school administrator to address the areas of Prevention/Mitigation and Preparedness – as outlined in the manual – in their individual school plans.

The district has a crisis intervention team for responding to emergencies, and each school has its own crisis team as well. Members of these teams have specific roles and responsibilities, and each school must report its team list to the district. The district provides yearly training for schools’ principals on emergency planning, and they are in turn responsible for training the rest of their faculty and staff.

*Drills.* A combination of fire, lockdown, and tornado drills are required by the district. Paula Swope, regional coordinator for the Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, assisted with the preparation of Dade’s plan. She said schools practice four lockdowns, one tornado, and three fire drills, but no shelter-in-place drills per year.<sup>88</sup> John S. Dibenedetto, public school safety coordinator, however, said schools practice monthly evacuation/fire drills and two lockdowns per year.<sup>89</sup> The district requires one lockdown drill per semester in 2004-2005.

Each of the three school principals interviewed said their schools practice lockdowns. Patrick Doyle, principal at the Avocado Elementary School said his school has two lockdowns per year, one statewide tornado drill every February, and monthly fire drills.<sup>90</sup> Monica Cueto, assistant principal at the Bent Tree Elementary School said they have one fire drill for every nine-week period, one tornado drill, and one to two lockdowns per year.<sup>91</sup> Luz Navarro, principal of Campbell Drive Middle School said her school performed two lockdowns per year and monthly fire drills.<sup>92</sup> All schools report their drills to the District through an intranet system.

*Communication.* The degree to which Dade schools communicate their emergency procedures to parents depends on the school. District safety coordinator Dibenedetto said the media is the main source of information for parents, alerting them of any emergency situations and what their actions should be.<sup>93</sup> Swope of the district’s Safety Office said parents receive flyers in the mail with updates on their children’s school’s preparedness plans.<sup>94</sup> She said a typical flyer would be a letter from an administrator, mailed to parents on a yearly basis.

Of the school personnel interviewed, the only concrete example they gave of parent communication was the school handbook, which apparently outlines emergency procedures along with other important information for parents. When America Prepared made a public records request from the district, asking for any records of communication between schools and parents regarding the schools' emergency response plans, the Office of Curriculum and Instruction responded with limited evidence of parent communication. Among the materials America Prepared received were sample student planners and parent handbooks that included little or no emergency information. Also included, however, was a reference to the district's *ehandbook*, which is posted online and contains information about emergency procedures for natural and man-made disasters.

### **Montgomery County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 190

Number of Students: 139,203

**Preparedness Grade: BEST**

Montgomery County Public Schools can be used as a model of preparedness for other school districts. Montgomery has an exemplary multi-hazard crisis plan. The district communicates regularly with schools and parents on emergency preparedness. Like nearby Fairfax, Montgomery translates its materials into five languages. Finally, the schools in the district drill regularly.

*The Plan.* The Montgomery County Public Schools plan for 2004-2005 contains specific instructions for schools developing their emergency plan and district-wide responses. According to the plan, each school must submit a completed crisis plan to the district by Sept. 10, 2004.<sup>95</sup> One of the topics discussed is the parent/child reunification process. The district requires schools to communicate details of this process to parents "near the beginning of each school year through different methods, e.g. principal newsletters, school's website, PTA meetings, etc."<sup>96</sup> Included in this plan is a comprehensive checklist for schools that outlines the specific responsibilities for: on-site emergency team planning; emergency/crisis support planning; practice drills; medical/special needs; and communication. (For the full text of this excellent check list, see Appendix: B). Also in this plan is a detailed set of instructions for each member of the incident command team by position.

The district's *Emergency Response Plan* addresses clearly the three different emergency codes used in Montgomery: Code Red, Code Blue, and Code Blue Shelter-in-Place. The plan states:

The types of situations that could warrant a Code Blue/Shelter-in-Place include weather related or suspected chemical, biological, or radiological events/incidents at or near a school. It is important to know where the main electrical power switch(s) is located in order to control (shut down) the school's HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system in the event of a suspected chemical, biological, or radiological emergency/crisis. If the fire alarm is activated, do not evacuate unless directed to do so by the principal/facility director. This is the only time the fire alarm system can be ignored during this enhanced level of Code Blue due to a suspected chemical, biological, or radiological incident.<sup>97</sup>

The district also provides to each school a copy of the *MCPS Emergency/Crisis Management Response Manual* that includes guidance on suspected chemical, biological, and radiological incidents.

As reported in an Oct. 9, 2002 article in the *New York Times*, Montgomery County went into "code blue" during the DC area sniper crisis.<sup>98</sup> According to the article, after the first shooting, "all of the 191 schools in the county school system received an automated telephone alert, along with an urgent e-mail message, detailing the circumstances of the emergency and the response."<sup>99</sup>

*Drills.* The district requires two code red and two code blue drills a year, in addition to 10 traditional fire drills. This was confirmed by 10 randomly interviewed principals, Sandra Rogers, co-president of the Galway Elementary Parents-Teacher's Association, and Steven Beatty, the PTA vice president of safety at Ashburton Elementary School.<sup>100</sup>

Cris Talsania, co-president of Galway Elementary School PTA, said that parents were notified of these drills before they occur. "This is for two reasons," she said. "To prepare students for the drills, and so the parents will know what to say when the children come home and say, 'I was under the desk with the lights out and the door locked today.'"<sup>101</sup>

In fact, Montgomery Public Schools has put extensive information on its website about the drills, including excerpts from two vivid videos produced by Sopris West Educational Services – one on code red and one on code blue. These videos are available for purchase online for \$79.00 each or \$145.00 for both, plus shipping & handling and sales tax.

*Communication.* Montgomery does an excellent job communicating with parents. Materials are available in Chinese, English, French, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese. Edward Clarke, director of the district's Department of Safety and Security, said that he works with local Parent-Teachers Associations to spread information about preparedness.

"We ask parents to learn about plans at their schools," Clarke said. "We're trying to do a better job producing brochures and awareness videos."<sup>102</sup>

Though Montgomery County Schools do not have the same "Keep-in-Touch" system used by Fairfax County, Clarke said the district uses [www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com) to relay information to parents.

### **New York City Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 1,164

Number of Students: 1,049,831

### **Preparedness Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

For such a vast school district (with more than a thousand schools and a million students enrolled, New York is almost 50 percent larger than the country's second largest school system), the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has managed to make important progress in preparedness. The department has a model system for formulating, vetting and approving individual school plans. It has exemplary interagency communication -- in part because New York Police Department officers are common fixtures in New York City schools. In-school officials told us that they were trained on terrorist threats, including bioterrorism, and they reported consistently that they perform regular fire drills, which are monitored by the New York City Fire Department.

Despite these successes, New York is doing a poor job of informing parents about school plans, conducting drills other than fire drills, and consistently maintaining emergency supplies that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security. For those reasons, America Prepared gave New York City a grade of "NEEDS IMPROVEMENT" even though its plans and interagency communication are among the best in the country.

*The Plan.* NYC DOE's plan is comprehensive and flexible. The department distributes what is called a "safety plan shell" to each school annually. Principals, along with their safety committees, tailor the general plan to fit their needs through a password-protected site, updating the plan electronically.<sup>103</sup> The first section of the plan details the

layout and distinguishing features of the school, including classrooms, hallways, students, teachers, and staff; where exits and entrances are located; the times of bell periods and lunch breaks; and schedule of after-school programs. This information is helpful not only to school personnel but also to the first responders and to the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), which takes command of schools in the event of an emergency. The rest of the plan details the response measures for various emergency scenarios, such as a chemical spill or chemical attack.

Francisco Sanchez, assistant principal for security at Evander Childs High School in the Bronx, said that the plan at his school was written by a committee of 15 people that included parents, custodians, representatives from the Police Department, and school aides.<sup>104</sup>

The department has a comprehensive review process for vetting emergency plans that is better than any we found across the country. The key is the multiple but non-redundant steps a plan goes through from drafting to final approval, explained Gregory Thomas, former public security safety chief for NYC DOE and current director of the Program for School Preparedness and Planning at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health.<sup>‡</sup> Thomas was the original author of the New York City emergency plan. Since Thomas' arrival at the department in 1997, the process of approving safety plans has gone from a paper-based one, which involved filling out a stack of documents that was "thick and ominous" to an electronic process, which debuted in 2000.<sup>105</sup> The plan must be approved by the principal, the regional safety administrator and then finally the city's Police Department. Once a plan receives all three seals of approval, it is sent to the Office of Emergency Management, which maintains a database of all city school plans.

In March of 2003, the *New York Times* reported that, among other preparedness shortcomings in the New York City school system, 68 percent of school safety officers surveyed by Teamsters Local 237 had not been informed of their school's emergency plan, according to the union.<sup>106</sup> However true that might have been then, awareness seems to have improved substantially since. "Basically everyone knows the emergency plan now," Carroll E. Haynes, the union's president said. "That reference was a long time ago, more than a year. Now, the officers have been trained to my satisfaction."<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>‡</sup> Gregory Thomas is also an Advisory Board member of The America Prepared Campaign.

Stanley Gibson, a security guard at South Bronx High School interviewed at random by America Prepared, seemed to substantiate that assessment. He told us that he knew his school's emergency plan and had received training on bioterrorism in late June 2004.<sup>108</sup>

Kits with emergency supplies are not uniform throughout the District. Food and water, Thomas maintained, are readily available in urban environments, so there is no need to stock up – an explanation which, of course, contradicts what the Department of Homeland Security's [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) website tells all families, including urban families. America Prepared, however, found some schools that did stock up, such as the Frederick Douglas Academy in Harlem, where Principal Gregory Hodge said he has a month's supply of food and water and has designated four "sleepover sites" within the building for emergencies.<sup>109</sup> Principal Rosenbloom of Elijah D. Clark Middle School said that there are eight two-way radios on site in addition to five first-aid kits and a defibrillator.

*Drills.* Every interview that America Prepared conducted in New York indicated that fire drills are performed regularly in New York City schools. Every principal said that they performed 12 fire drills per year and attended a mandatory safety meeting each month. Schools may decide to do additional drills, but they are not required. Teachers seemed aware of procedures for other scenarios, but reported that they are not practiced regularly.

New York maintains a high level of cooperation with local law enforcement agencies. As a result of a 1998 Memorandum of Understanding between the Police Department and the Board of Education, the Police Department has taken full responsibility for school security. Thus, the "school resource officers" present in NYC schools are in fact trained law enforcement officers, with the power to arrest, and in some cases, can be armed at the request of a concerned principal. The Police Department's School Safety Training Unit trains officers in various areas of school security, and in 2002 emphasis was placed on counter terrorism awareness.<sup>110</sup> In the event an emergency, a procedure has now been put in place whereby the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management would take over and direct the combined efforts of both the Police Department and the Department of Education.

*Communication.* New York City schools are not doing a good job communicating emergency preparedness plans to parents. When our researchers searched the NYC Department of Education website, the only security-related documents that we could find were about the impending war in Iraq from early 2003. One document, dated Feb. 13, 2003, requested that every principal hold an additional meeting of the School Safety Committee (the Committee is required to hold a meeting every month and record it) in order to review

the current safety plan. This memo, sent out by the former Chief Executive of the Office of School Safety and Planning, Benjamin B. Tucker (referred to as the “security czar” in the *New York Daily News*) also directed principals to make “information about evacuation routes and outside evacuation locations” available to faculty and parents.<sup>111</sup> No such information is easily available. Indeed, after the memo was issued, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said, “the parents of New York City school kids speak 120 different languages, and no matter how many times you try to send messages home, they don’t always get there.”<sup>112</sup>

In last year’s “A Guide for Parents and Families,” the only mention of security was vague, with a single sentence informing parents that the district had “added security, especially in high schools, including more school safety agents.”<sup>113</sup>

While Gregory Hodge, Principal of Frederick Douglass Academy said his school’s parents received memos regarding the school’s four-tier plan, Principal Rosenbloom said that the surrounding community is not aware of the plan but he has a clear master phone list for getting in touch with parents.

“The parents who come to PTA meetings are aware of the emergency plan,” said a South Bronx school official who asked not to be named. “But PTA meetings are poorly attended.”

### **Orange County Public Schools**

Number of Schools: 184

Number of Students: 166,818

### **Preparedness Grade: No Grade**

Citing security concerns, administrators in Orange County would not show America Prepared either a copy of their emergency plans or discuss the details of its contents, instead inviting us to a training session that they conducted for school secretaries. Since America Prepared could not independently evaluate the plan or its table of contents or conduct a statistically significant number of interviews with individuals aware of the plan, we decided not to issue a grade for Orange County.

America Prepared examined the drilling records of schools in Orange County and found that drills were performed regularly. We also polled the parents and found that 50

percent of Orange County parents thought that their child's school has an emergency plan. Only 31 percent knew the details of where their child would shelter in the school and only 21.5 percent of parents knew how they would reunite with their children if they were evacuated from school.

Leaving an assessment of the plan aside, Orange County needs to diversify its drills, do a better job communicating with parents and have supplies in schools that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

*The Plan.* According to district Security Manager Michael Ganio, there are two plan documents: a site-specific school template that each school fills out and a general district plan. Plans must be submitted to the District Safety and Security Office, and be approved by Richard Harris, the director.

America Prepared obtained a copy of the *Emergency Procedures Manual* for 2002. This manual does not cover terrorist threats such as biological, nuclear or radiological threats but does address chemical spills. It also outlines response procedures for various natural disasters. The template for teachers, obtained by America Prepared, is a series of worksheets where administrators can record the names of emergency response team members. It also includes space to record the key details of both the on-site and off-site evacuation plans. It does not refer to terrorism, and in the absence of seeing what the school says is an updated plan, we cannot evaluate it.

*Drills.* Orange County officials have focused on improving the district's training in emergency preparedness. Using a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Education, the district hired an independent contractor, Roger Huder, an emergency management trainer and paramedic who worked for the Orlando Fire Department for 26 years. He has introduced a series of "incident command system" workshops for school staff.

America Prepared attended one of Huder's workshops, a session for school secretaries. Huder disputes the notion that principals are the only ones who need training, pointing out that principals and assistant principals are often called off campus for meetings, leaving secretaries behind who must take charge. In addition to this training, he also convinced the district to use some of the grant money to distribute what he describes as "top-of-the-line 'go-bags,'" which include a flashlight, clipboard, 1,000 sticky tabs, pens, and other items that would be necessary for identification purposes.<sup>114</sup> Upon hearing this, several secretaries attending the training session spoke up, saying that they had already

collected these items, in compliance with a directive issued last year. Each school is now also scheduled to receive a trauma kit, a more extensive version of a first-aid kit.

Although Huder, the district's consultant, has already brought many changes to the district, he hopes to do more, including table top exercises, which had never been performed in the school district prior to his arrival in Feb. 2004.

According to Huder, the district internal communications system is struggling. While the district does have a call center to field emergency calls from schools (schools are told to dial 3333 to reach the 'district command'), but Huder says the district does not have a "command" person. This, he points out, is evidence of how the district has yet to focus adequately on emergency management and grasp what is really needed in the way of preparation. Huder told us that he fears that people are going to get their wake-up call in "a major, bad way" and wishes that "it didn't have to be like that."<sup>115</sup>

Severe weather drills are conducted "two or three times" a year, said Charles Anderson, fire marshal for Orange County Public Schools, whose department keeps a record of "all the drills that are required by the state, like emergency egress (fire) drills, lockdowns, and shelter-in-place drills."<sup>116</sup>

A copy of the Orange County 2003-2004 drill records, obtained by America Prepared, indicates that 39 of 184 schools practiced ONLY fire drills.

Despite news reports of poor drilling rates in local newspapers, Anderson insisted, "We have almost 100 percent compliance with our drilling."<sup>117</sup>

When asked specifically if the schools conducted any terrorism drills, he replied, "That's all part of a plan that we have. The schools have specific places where they can go if there is an emergency—places that they can walk to easily."<sup>118</sup> Safety Director Richard Harris said, "We perform emergency drills as outlined and described in the Florida state statute."<sup>119</sup>

*Communication.* Parental communication in Orange County is inadequate, with district officials relying heavily on the district's Memorandum of Understanding with the television channel Central Florida News 13 and its local media partners. When asked about the protocol for communicating with parents about emergency procedures, Karen E. Werrenrath, principal of Aloma Elementary School replied, "I don't know the protocol...I actually don't think we have one. That's a good idea...we should look into doing something like that."<sup>120</sup>

Assistant Principal Marguerite Vargas of Chickasaw Elementary School said that she believed that a flyer detailing emergency information was sent out at the beginning of the year to parents. She said she was certain that a handbook was sent out to parents, but after downloading the Orange County Public School District handbook that she referred to, America Prepared researchers found that it *does not* include any information about emergency procedures.<sup>121</sup>

When asked if parents could receive information about emergency plans, Safety Director Harris said that if “parents are really interested, they are encouraged to come into school and talk with principals. And, if they want, they can come in and see a copy of the *general plan*.”<sup>122</sup>

Security Manager Michael Ganio also confirmed that there was no district-wide protocol for parental communication, citing the district’s concerns about security and “causing more confusion for parents because there are ‘primary’ and ‘alternative’ evacuation sites for both on-campus and off-campus.”<sup>123</sup> He did mention, however, a telephone hotline capable of receiving, he said, hundreds of calls. There are 166,818 students in Orange County Public Schools.

Ganio added that schools are encouraged to record their own message regarding emergency procedures on their incoming recording, but of the over 30 schools called by America Prepared researchers, no such recording was ever heard.

### **School District of Palm Beach County**

Number of Schools: 193

Number of Students: 160,223

**Preparedness Grade: BEST**

The School District of Palm Beach County has a long history of robust school security and safety efforts. School District Police Department Chief James Kelly, one of the founding members of the department in 1975, has been chief of the force for the past 15 years. Chief Kelly has focused on a wide range of security issues, and his department has been touted by many as “a model for school districts across the country.”<sup>124</sup>

Innovative measures introduced by Kelly include the requirement of photo identification badges for all teachers, students, and visitors, a GPS tracking system for county school buses, and the introduction of several violence-intervention programs.

Perhaps most important, however, is Chief Kelly's recognition that schools are an easy target for terrorists.

"As I've been telling anyone who will listen, the way to paralyze this country would be to attack an elementary school," says Police Chief Kelly in an Oct. 2002 *Sun-Sentinel* article.<sup>125</sup>

The School District of Palm Beach County, represented by Kelly, is a member of both the Palm Beach County Anti-Terrorism Committee and the South East Region Seven Anti-Terrorism Task Force.

*The Plan.* According to Donald Morphesis, the district's crisis plan coordinator, all district schools are sent a template, which must be filled out and returned for approval by the end of the first month of school. Additionally, the district sends each school an emergency procedures manual, which is over 200 pages long and addresses 70 different critical incidents that "can and do occur." To address complaints about the manual's length, Morphesis has initiated a series of crisis management workshops that are designed to review important sections of the manual.

"Workshops are the major thing that I do," said Morphesis. "I come around to schools, either individually or with five or six groups at a time."

At the beginning of each year, principals must schedule a time for Morphesis to come to talk with their crisis response team and staff. Principals of new schools are required to set up a time with Morphesis to assist in filling out the plan. Principals whose schools are designated as community shelters are also briefed on what to do in the event of an emergency. Schools are equipped with a crisis response kit, which includes items such as several first-aid kits, a bullhorn, sticky tags and pens, and a copy of the roll call for the entire school. Additionally, teachers are urged to keep mini-kits in their classrooms, which contain rubber gloves, masks, a first-aid kit, and a flashlight. Morphesis is getting principals to ask local businesses to donate emergency supplies to schools. For example, if a school were to evacuate to a neighboring baseball lot, he said, it would be great if a principal had a deal with a sponsor who could supply water to that site. He also has been looking into securing portable sanitation units for these evacuation sites.

*Drills.* Fire drills are conducted 10 times per year, with two occurring in August, as required by Florida state law. Tornado drills are conducted twice a year, which involve herding students into a center hallway and sheltering in the interior of the building.

Hurricane drills are regarded as unnecessary, said Morphesis, as hurricane warnings are issued days in advance and with schools usually closed for major storms.

Code red lockdown drills, which serve as preparation for shootings or intruder incidents, are performed twice a year. Although off-site evacuation plans exist, for logistical reasons, children participate in only the on-site evacuation drills to locations on campus, which occur twice a year, or when needed, as was the case in Aug. 2003, when the Jerry Thomas Elementary School was evacuated due to a toxin scare in a kindergarten classroom.<sup>126</sup> When asked about the possibility of doing drills with buses, as neighboring Martin County did in 2002, Chief Kelly said that officials were entertaining the idea, but cited financial considerations as a major limitation.

Although Palm Beach County was cited for having fire violations in Oct. 2000 and Sept. 2001, many of these violations were said to be due to lack of funding, with the majority of violations occurring in poor, overcrowded schools.<sup>127</sup>

*Communication.* Communication appears to be one of the district's fortes, with officials employing innovative measures to ensure that both parents and local officials have updated emergency information. According to Chief Kelly, the school district has not invested in a phone bank or reverse 911-system since it can use Palm Beach County's notification system, the Communicator, which uses 24 phone lines and can place 3,000 calls per hour. Thus, the money that would have gone toward such a system can be used for other security measures. Serving as back-up for the phone system, there are several radio options available.

When asked about back-up communications plans, Kelly described three different radio systems: conventional, trunking (a more sophisticated radio technology), and digital. He also noted that HAM radios could be used as a last resort during an emergency.

Kelly emphasized the importance of interagency information sharing. He cited the example of the anthrax scare following 9/11 during which a local man died and described how district officials can receive printouts of the number of sick leaves for both the 20,000 school employees and the 170,000 students—printouts that could notify them of an outbreak.

The district has also partnered with local media in order to communicate with parents, and even holds a 'hurricane preparedness session' during which the media, parents, and the general community can learn about the district's hurricane preparedness plan. The district's Safe Schools department also hosts an interactive television talk show

for parents on the district's Education Network, which discusses various safety issues. Critical announcements about school rules and procedures are also issued on the network, all of which are broadcast in English, Creole, and Spanish.

District officials have recently applied for a grant that would allow them to publish a pamphlet with general information about emergency procedures in four languages (English, Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish) and distribute it to all district parents. While they are still waiting for news of their grant's status, officials say that they would distribute this pamphlet not only to public school parents, but also to parents of children in the district's alternative, charter and private schools.

### **School District of Philadelphia**

Number of Schools: 276

Number of Students: 211,003

#### **Preparedness Grade:       NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

Emergency planning in the School District of Philadelphia is in a transition phase; many improvements seem on the way. The district is working to clarify its emergency plans with a focus on the emergency response and crisis management. Vernard Trent, director, of the office of school climate and safety and Sandra Hollie, the coordinator for emergency response, said they are in the process of implementing an Incident Command System and are working to set up a series of training sessions that will include tabletop exercises for CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear). They also recommend holding a yearly regional emergency/crisis response conference for parents, community stakeholders, all first responders, and other members of the Philadelphia region. These ideas have been partly inspired by the Department of Education grant program. Philadelphia just reapplied for a grant, which it did not receive last year and according to Brendan Lee, special assistant to the chief safety executive, the district will implement these programs regardless of the outcome of their grant application.

These are all good ideas, and it is unfortunate that they are not currently in place. The Philadelphia emergency plan, in its current form, does not adequately address terrorist threats. While the plan outlines the procedures for evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down procedures, it does not address biological, nuclear or radiological threats. Philadelphia schools perform 10 fire drills per year but shelter-in-place and lockdown drills are practiced irregularly. The school district has made some strong attempts to get

information out to parents, but, like many of the other districts, the process is not standardized or mandated. Finally, schools in the district do not have kits that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined for citizens on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

*The Plan.* According to the Director of the Office of School Climate and Safety, Vernard Trent, School District of Philadelphia’s emergency planning is in a transition phase. They are working to separate Emergency Response and Crisis Management from general School Safety, and to make these plans “standalone documents.”<sup>128</sup> Until this summer, the district has distributed its comprehensive *Emergency Response & Crisis Management Plan* to schools every year. The *Plan* is also posted online. It calls for every school to have a safety team (members with specific roles and responsibilities during an emergency) and it has a section on “Multi-Hazard Safety Plans,” in which fire/evacuation, lockdown, and shelter-in-place procedures are outlined. The *Plan* has inserts that schools must complete with their specific information and return to the district by Oct. of every school year.

While the plan addresses chemical spills and aircraft emergencies, it does not address biological, nuclear or radiological threats. Trent said that a key element for the district now – because of the Department of Homeland Security and terrorism-related emergencies—is looking at a more regional response.<sup>129</sup>

*Drills.* The district requires ten fire drills per year. Chief Joseph McGraw of the Hazardous Materials Unit of Philadelphia Fire Department maintains that schools are also required to practice two shelter-in-place drills per year, and these can be exchanged for two of the ten fire drills.

All districts should practice shelter-in-place drills but in Philadelphia this takes on special significance because of its proximity to many chemical facilities.<sup>§§</sup> In fact, Chief McGraw said that the shelter-in-place program in Philadelphia was not a post – 9/11 initiative by the schools, but rather a grass roots effort that began about 20 years ago in Bridesburg, a Philadelphia neighborhood, when there was a major explosion at a nearby plant. After the explosion, the Bridesburg community began a campaign for shelter-in-place, which gradually spread across the city. After 9/11, McGraw said, it just became easier to push it into law.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>§§</sup>See Adam Fifield, “How Safe, How Secure?” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 20, 200) A01.

On the district website, there is a notice dated March 2003 announcing the initiation of a shelter-in-place plan, and it calls for “At least one shelter in place drill by the end of the year with the Philadelphia Fire Department at each school.”<sup>131</sup> When asked if that goal was met, Brendan Lee, special assistant to the safety executive, said he does not know.<sup>132</sup>

Anastasia Karloutsos of the office of parent and community relations, who chairs the school subcommittee on the regional counter-terrorism task force, said that all schools have practiced shelter-in-place.<sup>133</sup> But school personnel had mixed accounts. Gwendolyn Baggett, assistant principal, E. Washington Rhodes Middle School, said they have monthly fire drills and “just started” the new shelter-in-place drill.<sup>134</sup> Katherine McKinzie, local management officer, Benjamin Franklin High, said the school is required to have 10 fire drills per year, that shelter-in-place has been done in the past but she couldn’t say how frequently, and that lockdown drills, though they were not practiced in the past year, have also been conducted in the past.<sup>135</sup> Wendy Shapiro, principal, Jules E. Mastbaum High said her school practices two fire drills per month and once a month in cold weather, and one shelter-in-place drill per year.<sup>136</sup>

*Communication.* While there was written communication from the district to parents when the shelter-in-place program was implemented in 2003, the bulk of the communication regarding schools’ emergency procedures is dependent schools. Hollie, the coordinator for emergency response, said each school should be communicating their plans to parents.<sup>137</sup> Brendan Lee said it is up to each school as to how parents should be contacted in an emergency.<sup>138</sup>

In the event of an emergency, Karloutsos of the parent liaison office said the district has an automated calling system, through which thousands of parents can be called.<sup>139</sup> Patricia J. Raymond, president of the Home and Schools Association, said the district’s safety department works with her group to get the message out to parents.<sup>140</sup> Paul Socolar, a public school parent and the editor and director of the *Philadelphia Public School Notebook*, said he does not know anything about his daughter’s school’s emergency procedures, and he does not recall receiving any kind of communication about them. He added that they might have been mentioned in the parent handbook, but he does not know.<sup>141</sup>

## Prince George's County Public Schools

Number of Schools: 196

Number of Students: 137,373

**Preparedness Grade: GOOD**

Though not as prepared as the nearby Fairfax and Montgomery counties, Prince George's County has made good progress toward preparedness in the last year. While the district does plan for terrorist incidents and includes procedures for lockdowns and sheltering-in-place, it does not drill regularly for these occurrences. The district does not maintain kits that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined for citizens on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). The district does, however, make solid attempts to communicate emergency preparedness to parents.

*The Plan.* Prince George's County developed a 17-page template for schools across the district that offers basic guidelines for school emergency plans, including instructions for "code red" and "code blue," two forms of lock-down. Included in the template are basic instructions and discussions of incident command systems and crisis structures. There are also procedures for lockdowns, evacuations, off-site evacuations, and shelter-in-place.

Russell Tedesco, director of Security Services said that Prince George's plan predates the Department of Education *Guide*, and that the district drew on Federal Emergency Management Agency sources for guidance.<sup>142</sup>

The extent to which schools pursue emergency planning appears to vary, but Tedesco said that they did three hour blocks of instruction to help them develop.

"Some schools have run with it and developed additional plans," Tedesco said.

Schools should have their own emergency response teams, and Tedesco said that principals use employee surveys to inform their selection of team members. A principal could find out which faculty and staff members are National Guardsmen, and include them on the response team.

Emergency kits are also part of the plan.

"Generally speaking, there should be about two per school," Tedesco said. These kits should contain about 14-15 items, including student rosters, phone books, emergency notification family cards, flashlights, and batteries.

All elementary schools have two-way radios and every school has bullhorns and crash radios. This initiative was made possible by a Department of Education grant.

Tedesco said schools are also prepared to sustain shelter-in-place for up to two days, because they have enough food and liquids on hand. Schools do not, however, have plastic sheeting or duct tape.

“The fire service people said that was ridiculous,” Tedesco said.

The district initiated regional training programs to help principals develop their school plans. The training, which was required for every principal, consisted of three-hour instruction blocks and covered topics such as shootings, fatal bus accidents, tornados, and school emergency plans. Security Director Tedesco said principals have also been trained by the district on shelter-in-place. Aside from principals, however, no other faculty or staff has received training from the district and much of the plan’s communication appears to depend on each principal.

“A lot of this stuff fortunately or unfortunately falls onto the principals,” Tedesco said.

This year the district asked each school how they have updated their plan and communicated it to staff, but aside from this it is unclear how closely the district monitors individual school plans. Tedesco did say that the district sends copies of the plans to local first responding agencies.

*Drills.* Currently only fire drills are required by the district, but some schools also practice shelter-in-place, evacuation drills, and lockdowns.

When asked about drilling, Security Director Tedesco said schools do fire drills and he said some shelter-in-place and evacuation drills have also been done. He added that some schools practice lockdown drills – though they are not yet required – and the district is currently looking into the practice of tabletop exercises.

Of the two parents interviewed by America Prepared, both said they knew that their children’s schools have done lockdowns.

*Communication.* Efforts to communicate emergency procedures occur at both the district and local school level. Of course, some schools do a much better job of communicating than others.

André Hornsby, chief executive officer of the Board of Education for Prince George’s County, sent a letter home to parents in Feb. 2004 providing information about preparing for a terrorist attack.<sup>143</sup>

The district website has a section on “Emergency Preparedness,” with links to “Schools-Out.com,” a service that provides free automatic emergency Internet notification, via e-mail, to parents that choose to sign up for it; a “Field Trip Status” prohibiting travel to SARS-infected countries; and a list of school system emergency code definitions.

Parent-child reunification is part of the district’s plan, and Security Director Tedesco said the district places heavy emphasis on making sure students have emergency information cards, reminding parents both through the website and school handbooks to fill them out. The cards must include the names of individuals who can pick children up in the event of an emergency.

The district does not release the whole plan to parents.

“There are enough lunatics in the world that we don’t want to show them,” Tedesco said. “There are meetings in the school year – parents and students have assemblies at the school and I met personally with the PTAs regarding emergency plans.”<sup>144</sup>

Cynthia Cook, a public school parent of three, said she learned about her children’s school’s emergency plans through the principal because she took the initiative to ask. She got additional information through a school bulletin, which she believes is sent out at the beginning of each school year. Cook said materials were sent out during the sniper incident.<sup>145</sup>

### **San Diego City School District**

Number of Schools: 182

Number of Students: 141,599

### **Preparedness Grade:       NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

San Diego needs to draft a more comprehensive district-wide plan in addition to the site specific school plans that the district currently uses. While the procedures outlined by the district are valuable to principals and teachers drafting plans, the district does not adequately address terrorist threats. Schools do not have kits that meet the recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security as outlined on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Drilling procedures, while adequate in the district, should be extended to require shelter-in-place and total emergency plan drills. Finally, parent communication should be standardized.

*The Plan.* California state law requires every school to develop a safety plan and a School Accountability Report Card, which includes safety. San Diego City School District does not distribute a template plan for schools to complete, but rather provides them with a standardized set of emergency procedures that they must incorporate into their individually drafted plans. The procedures are posted online and address thirteen different categories of emergencies including: fire, environmental emergencies, lockdowns, and terrorism/kidnapping. These procedures are not as comprehensive as those in other districts examined; they do not address biological or chemical releases, for example, and the section on terrorism only discusses hostage situations.

According to the procedures, San Diego schools must develop plans that include a site map, planned evacuation routes, assembly areas, utilities shut-off valves, first aid/supply stations, and designated areas for prolonged staff/student care. The school must review and update the site plan not later than Oct. 1 of each year, and a copy of it must be filed with the School Police Services Department. Schools must also establish a standard critical response team from in-school staff.

Public Information Officer Steven Baratte said every school has a crisis kit with a school safety plan in it, as well as other materials that are selected on a school by school basis. Schools must report their safety plans to the School Police Department in Jan., and the department then checks to make sure that they have met the 10 criteria mandated by the state. The criteria address a range of safety issues – from school crime to dress code – but one criterion in particular, *Disaster Procedure*, addresses emergency planning. Officer Kenneth Hebdon of the San Diego School Police, who oversees the comprehensive school safety plan, said “some schools are more thorough than others” when it comes to drafting their individual plans.<sup>146</sup>

*Drills.* Drilling in San Diego is weak. According to the procedures outlined by the district, schools are required to have monthly fire drills in elementary schools and bi-annual fire drills in secondary schools. Earthquake or disaster drills are required once quarterly in elementary schools, twice a year in secondary schools, and once a year in all other places. Bus safety drills are required once a year at all levels, along with disaster preparedness plan drills. Schools are required to have school campus/site emergency drills once a year as well. Shelter-in-place is not practiced or required.

Based on our interviews with district and school administrators, however, the drill requirements are inconsistently carried out. It appears that schools practice some

combination of fire, earthquake, and in some cases, lockdown, drills. Lieutenant Richard Roda of San Diego School Police said that schools perform evacuation and lockdown drills in addition to fire drills.<sup>147</sup> Officer Kenneth Hebdon of San Diego School Police said he does not know the exact number of drills required, but he understands that emergency, fire, and lockdown drills are performed.<sup>148</sup> Director of Risk Management Kandra Olsen said that schools drill for fires, earthquakes, and school site emergencies (lockdowns).<sup>149</sup> Mark Marshall, principal, Hardy Elementary School said his school practices two evacuation drills per year and lockdowns “on occasion.”<sup>150</sup> Dana Shelburne, principal, La Jolla High School said she had monthly fire drills and what she characterized as a yearly duck and cover exercise.<sup>151</sup>

*Communication.* Schools have made attempts to communicate their emergency procedures to parents. Baratte, the public information officer for the district, said he knows they have sent letters home to parents to discuss lockdowns, explaining the procedures in place and the safety issues they address.<sup>152</sup> Kandra Olsen, director of risk management said she has been copied on memos sent to parents that tell them what to do in emergency situations.<sup>153</sup> Detective Hebdon said principals seek input from parents through PTAs and School Site Councils as they draft their schools’ plans.<sup>154</sup> He said principals must present the plan at a public meeting, where all parents have the chance to review it, and the date of the meeting must be written in the plan.

Of the two school principals interviewed, one made more effort to communicate with parents than the other: Principal Mark Marshall of the Hardy Elementary School said he sends a letter home, usually in the fall, which includes an explanation of parent-child reunification.<sup>155</sup> Shelburne of La Jolla High said she talks to the PTA and parents can find information on the school website, but she does not send letters home.<sup>156</sup>

## **SECTION VI: PUTTING IT ALL INTO CONTEXT**

As we canvassed the districts and interviewed administrators, emergency management personnel, parents and volunteers, we saw some important trends. Money was almost always a problem, as was size – no matter how rich or large the district was. Parents played a significant role in getting a district prepared. But the biggest factor was the resolve of each school system’s administrators.

*Funding.* Funding is one reason why some districts are better prepared than others, but it is not a definitive factor. Eight of the top 20 largest school districts received a Department of Education grant last year:

- New York (\$891,171)
- Los Angeles (\$500,000)
- Broward (\$500,000)
- Hillsborough (\$1,000,000)
- San Diego (\$505,797)
- Montgomery (\$626,713)
- Prince George's (\$530,729)
- Memphis (\$497,071)

Montgomery was one of the best prepared of the twenty largest school districts. We found Los Angeles, Hillsborough, Prince George's, and Memphis to be "GOOD." We found that New York, San Diego and Broward "NEEDS IMPROVEMENT."

For districts like Chicago, where equipment was needed to improve the district's communication infrastructure, funding was clearly a problem. Andres Durbak, the director of school safety for the district, said that the district could not afford communications back-up systems even though their phone system would likely be inoperable if electricity was disrupted.<sup>157</sup> If we are to expect that every district compile kits for the children in their schools to meet the recommendations outlined by the Department of Homeland Security on [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for the average home, then that will take a more generous allocation of the schools' resources. But there are some cases where schools and entire districts are beating the odds, for example Principal Gregory Hodge at Frederick Douglass Academy in Harlem, New York has supplies of food and water for his students.

Yet, in places like Clark County where Douglas Wilson, principal of Hollingsworth Elementary School, says he cannot get in touch with his parents because "there are not a lot of phones in homes," family demographics in the district obviously play a crucial role.

*Parental Involvement.* Fairfax County Public Schools is a good case study for the importance of parental involvement. Fairfax is the BEST in part because the parents are so involved in the school district. Yet, when districts like Fairfax Public Schools translate their materials into seven different languages and inundate their parents with materials on the district's preparedness and one quarter of parents still don't know that their school has an

emergency plan, one must ask where the school's responsibility ends and the parent's duty to be informed begins.

Los Angeles Unified's emergency preparedness program started primarily as a drive by angry parents to implement adequate preparations for earthquakes in the 1990s. Parents in Philadelphia began a movement to bring shelter-in-place procedures into the schools as a result of a major explosion. Like everything in a school – truancy, literacy, behavior, and school spirit – preparedness is improved when parents become involved.

*Size.* Many administrators reported that the size of the district was a major factor in it not being more prepared. This is as true for Duval County with 130,000 students as it was for New York City with over one million students. Yet, some of the larger districts have built impressive systems for informing parents and implementing plans. The two largest – Los Angeles and New York – have enlisted the help of other agencies. The New York Office of Emergency Management plays a significant role in making sure that the City's schools are prepared. Los Angeles has its own television channel.

*Resolve of Administrators.* When we asked Hillsborough County Superintendent, Dr. Earl Lennard, why his district was so prepared, he looked puzzled. But we thought it was a good question: Hillsborough is not New York City after all.

“Are the kids in Hillsborough not as important as the kids in New York?” Lennard replied. Part of the reason that Hillsborough was so prepared, he added, is because the administrators have been with the district for so long and they are members of the community. They take their preparedness seriously in Hillsborough.

In both Chicago Public Schools and Detroit Public Schools, the only two districts to receive FAILING grades from America Prepared, security and safety personnel said that they needed greater support from their superiors in order to make big inroads in emergency preparedness.

## **SECTION VII: TIPS FOR PARENTS**

The first thing that parents should do is contact their school, and find out what its emergency plan says. Then, ask these questions:

- Does the plan specifically cover terrorist threats including biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological incidents?

- How often do the principal and teachers practice the plan? Do they receive specialized training?
- What kind of supplies does your school have on hand? Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to find out what the Department of Homeland Security recommends that you have in your home. Does your school follow those recommendations?
- Who is your principal's contact at the police and fire departments? How often do they communicate?
- Do the police and fire departments have floor plans of your child's school? Have they been to the school? Have they reviewed your school's emergency plan?
- How can I contribute to my school's emergency preparedness? When are the meetings?

## APPENDIX A: Memphis City Schools -- Sample Parent Letter

North Area Elementary  
3782 Jackson Avenue  
Memphis, Tennessee 38108  
Phone: 385-4240 Fax: 385-4221

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In an effort to continue to keep our school safe and secure we must prepare for inclement weather or any other disasters that may arise. North Area Elementary in conjunction with other Memphis City Schools has been working on an Emergency Management Plan since the beginning of the year. Advance planning can ensure that we are prepared to deal with a crisis situation. One part of our plan requires that we have necessary supplies and clothes stored in every classroom in the event that the staff and students are required to stay in the school after hours should an emergency situation arise. Your child will be bringing home a list of items that will be needed to store in each classroom. Your child/children should only bring the one item assigned to his/her homeroom class and an old t-shirt by Monday, April 12, 2004 if possible. For example, if your child is in kindergarten, he will bring a box of trash bags. Once the items are brought to school our staff will make kits that will include all the objects, and the kit will be stored in each classroom.

As always we strive to make safety the number one priority at North Area Elementary. Thank you for helping us to be prepared with the necessary supplies in the event of an emergency.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Delaney  
Principal

KK-01 & 02	BOX OF TRASH BAGS
KK-03 & 04	ROLL OF DUCT TAPE
KK-05 & 06	JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER
1-01 & 1-02	ROLL OF PAPER TOWELS
1-03 & 1-04	BOX OF GAUZE
1-05 & 1-06	BOX OF CRACKERS
2-01 & 2-02	BOTTLE OF PEROXIDE
2-03 & 2-04	4 ROLLS OF TOILET PAPER
2-05 & 2-06	BAG OF GOLDFISH CRACKERS
3-01 & 3-02	A GALLON OF WATER (PURIFIED)
3-03 & 3-04	PLASTIC CUPS & ASSORTED PLASTIC UTENSILS
3-05 & 3-06	BOTTLE OF RUBBING ALCOHOL & ANTIBIOTIC CREAM
4-01 & 1-07	HAND SANITIZER
4-03 & 4-04	BOX OF ASSORTED BAND-AIDS
4-05 & 4-06	FLASHLIGHTS

Please, every student should bring in old t-shirts for their room.

*\*Information used on this form was taken from the '02-'03 Emergency Management Plan submitted by Cordova Elementary*

**Appendix B: Montgomery County Checklist**



Department of School Safety and Security  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency/Crisis Preparedness Checklist**

The following checklist is provided to assist principals/directors in being better prepared to respond to emergency/crisis situations.

<b>On-Site Emergency Team (OSET) Planning</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Has the school or facility emergency/crisis plan been updated for 2004-05 and submitted for approval to the Department of School Safety and Security?		
Has the school or facility emergency/crisis plan been approved?		
Has the school or facility emergency/crisis plan been reviewed with all staff members?		
Has staff received emergency/crisis preparedness training by the Department of School Safety and Security?		
Are staff and students familiar with Code Red/Code Blue procedures?		
Has a meeting been held with the OSET to discuss the emergency/crisis plan and the roles and responsibilities of the OSET members?		
Do the back-up OSET members know their roles and responsibilities?		
Have OSET meetings been scheduled to occur regularly throughout the year?		
Has the OSET been provided with a copy of the approved school or facility emergency/crisis plan?		
Have additional incident commanders been identified who will coordinate the emergency/crisis response in the absence of the primary incident commander?		
Have interior and exterior command posts been identified?		
Has the staff been made aware of the locations of the command posts?		
Is there a plan to monitor access to the building and securing doors when appropriate?		
Is there a clearly identified visitor sign-in and identification procedure in place?		
Have on and off-campus multi-hazard evacuation locations been identified?		
Has a parent/child reunification plan been developed and shared with parents, staff and students?		
Have on and off-campus parent information/reunification staging areas been identified?		
Have parents/guardians been notified as to the locations of the parent/child reunification sites?		
Are the emergency kit and first aid kit(s) regularly checked to ensure readiness of supplies?		
Is there a process to authorize additional parties to pick-up the child?		
Is your staff familiar with shelter-in-place procedures?		
Are joint-occupancy users (daycare centers) included in the emergency/crisis plan?		
<b>Emergency/Crisis Support Planning</b>		
Have staff members been assigned to assess mental health needs following an emergency/crisis?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have the counselor, psychologist, and PPW been involved in emergency/crisis response planning, including needed mental health supports?		
Is there awareness of students/staff who may be vulnerable in an emergency/crisis because of past loss experiences or unique needs?		
Is staff aware of the MCPS Employee Assistance Program?		

(rev. 6-30-04)

	Yes	No
<b>Practice Drills</b>		
Are staff and students familiar with evacuation procedures?		
Have fire evacuation drills been practiced?		
Have Code Red/Code Blue drills been practiced?		
Are regular debriefing meetings held after practice drills or actual emergencies/crises?		
Are the emergency cut-off valves clearly marked for identification purposes?		
Is the appropriate staff aware of the location of the emergency gas, HVAC, water, and MAIN electric cut-offs valves/switches and do staff members know how to shut them off?		

	Yes	No
<b>Medical/Special Needs</b>		
Have staff members who are certified in first aid/CPR been identified?		
Has the staff been notified of the locations of the first aid kits? How many first aid kits are in the school/facility?		
Have primary and back-up staff members been identified to handle medications for those students who require medications?		
Have provisions been made to address the special needs of disabled students, limited-English-proficient students, and other student/staff populations?		

	Yes	No
<b>Communication</b>		
Is the administrative team familiar with the MCPS communications protocol? (i.e., Nextel all call, 911, and OSP notifications)		
Are accurate student lists including emergency contact information accessible?		
Are backup communications procedures in place in the event of the loss of telecommunications or power?		
Is the NOAA alert radio operational, equipped with batteries, and turned-on?		
Is the Nextel emergency phone charged, programmed, operational, and accessible to designated staff?		
Have all designated staff been trained and know how to operate the Nextel emergency phone?		
Is the emergency cell phone that is kept in the principal's office charged, operational, and turned-on at all times?		
Are the portable classroom cell phones operational and fully charged?		
Is the school communication process (phone tree, listserve) in effect to inform parents/guardians of emergency information?		
Is there an updated staff phone tree that has been tested for accuracy and effectiveness?		
Is a system in place for PTA/community communications?		
Is there an updated list of emergency contact numbers, including all necessary public safety and central administration numbers?		
Are all portable communication devices, including two-way radios, maintained in proper working order?		

**Reviewed by Principal**  
Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed by Field Security Coordinator**  
Field Security Coordinator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(This checklist must be completed, signed, and faxed to the Department of School Safety and Security, 301-279-3192, no later than September 30, 2004)  
(rev. 6-30-04)

## APPENDIX C: POLLING RESULTS

The survey was conducted among a total of 1,200 adults with children aged 6 to 18 attending public schools. A total of 200 interviews were conducted in each of six areas: Fairfax County, VA; Orange County, FL; Chicago, IL; Detroit, MI, Clark County, NV; and Palm Beach County, FL. Respondents were interviewed by telephone using traditional random digit dialing methodology on August 5th and August 7th through August 11th. The margin of error for the total sample was +/-4%. The margin of error for each geographic area was +/-7%.

### Does the school that your children attend have an emergency plan to deal with a terrorist attack or major natural disaster?

	Fairfax County	Orange County, FL	Clark County	City of Detroit	Palm Beach	City of Chicago
YES	75%	50%	47%	50%	54%	41%
No	4%	7%	10%	15%	9%	14%
Don't Know	22%	43%	44%	36%	38%	45%

### Do you know what your school's emergency plan says about where your children would go if instructed by emergency officials to stay inside in a sealed environment, also referred to as shelter-in-place?

	Fairfax County	Orange County, FL	Clark County	City of Detroit	Palm Beach	City of Chicago
YES	50%	31%	33%	35%	34.6%	20%
No	1%	2.7%	3%	4.5%	3.3%	20%

### Do you know the process for reuniting with your children if they are evacuated from school?

	Fairfax County	Orange County, FL	Clark County	City of Detroit	Palm Beach	City of Chicago
YES	34%	22.5%	25%	27.5%	25%	20%
No	2%	4%	4.7%	7%	5%	7%

## NOTES

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### **Introduction**

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Andres Durbak, director of safety and security at Chicago Public Schools was conducted in person by Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

### **Broward County Public Schools**

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Dr. Joseph Melita, Executive Director of Special Investigative Unit & Professional Standards, Broward County Public Schools was conducted Catherine Livingston by phone on Aug. 11, 2004 at 11:15 a.m. EST.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Keith Bromery of Media Relations at Broward County Public Schools was conducted by Rebecca Stogsdill by phone on June 8, 2004 at 10:45 a.m. EST.

<sup>4</sup>Melita interview.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Debra Johnson, assistant principal of Atlantic West Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 20, 2004 at 2:55 p.m. EST. Interview with Theresa McCarthy, assistant principal of Bayview Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 16, 2004 at 12:45 p.m. EST.

<sup>6</sup>Melita interview.

<sup>7</sup>Interview with Christopher W. Carney, principal of Bennett Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 15 at 2:30 p.m. EST.

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Theresa McCarthy, assistant principal of Bayview Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 16, 2004 at 12:45 p.m. EST.

### **Chicago Public Schools**

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Andres Durbak, director of safety and security at Chicago Public Schools was conducted in person by Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>10</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>11</sup>Chicago Public Schools, "Emergency Management Plan" (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 2003) Hazardous Material Information Sheet at back of report. Available online at: <http://www.cps.k12.il.us/AboutCPS/Departments/SafetyandSecurity/emp.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup>Jeanie Chung, Chicago Public Schools Office of Communications, "CPS Phases Out Mercury Thermometers: Thousands Collected Will Result in Greater Safety, Savings" (Press Release, Feb. 27, 2003) Available Online at: [www.cpsk12.il.us/AboutCPS/PressReleases/February\\_2003/thermometers\\_2\\_27\\_2003.html](http://www.cpsk12.il.us/AboutCPS/PressReleases/February_2003/thermometers_2_27_2003.html).

<sup>13</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>14</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>15</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>16</sup>Interview with Andres Durbak was conducted by phone by Keisha Toms on June 24, 2004.

<sup>17</sup>Interview of Michael Connolly, principal of Arthur Canty High School was conducted by phone by Allison Phinney on July 8, 2004. Interview with John Cook, assistant principal of Charles Wacker School was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro.

<sup>18</sup>Interview with Dennis Cooney, Chicago Police Department Officer in John F. Kennedy High School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on Aug. 27, 2004.

<sup>19</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with Theodore Chung, Deputy Chief of Staff at the Chicago Mayor's Office was conducted in person by Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004 at 8:00 a.m.

<sup>21</sup>Theodore Chung interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004 at 8:00 a.m.

<sup>22</sup>Chicago Public Schools, "Emergency Kit and Telephone Contacts," *Emergency Management Plan* (Chicago: Chicago Public Schools, 2003) 4.1.

<sup>23</sup>Jonathan Schachter, Managing Deputy Director, Chicago Office of Emergency Management, Aug. 18, 2004 via fax.

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<sup>24</sup>Interview with Betty Carlvn, principal of Dewey Academy of Fine Arts was conducted by phone by Allison Phinney on July 8, 2004.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with John Cook, assistant principal of Charles Wacker School was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro.

<sup>26</sup>Jonathan Schachter, Managing Deputy Director, Chicago Office of Emergency Management, Aug. 18, 2004 via fax.

<sup>27</sup>Interview with Betty Carlvn, principal of Dewey Academy of Fine Arts was conducted by phone by Allison Phinney on July 8, 2004.

<sup>28</sup>Interview with Roosevelt Jones, assistant principal of Von Student High School was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 28, 2004.

<sup>29</sup>These resources are available online at: <http://www.cps.k12.il.us/Parent/september11.htm>.

<sup>30</sup>Mike Vaughn, Chicago Public Schools Office of Communications. "CPS Bolsters Support for Schools to Help Address Issues Surrounding War with Iraq." (Press Release, March 20, 2003). Available online at: [http://www.cps.k12.il.us/AboutCPS/PressReleases/March\\_2003/war\\_3\\_20\\_2003.html](http://www.cps.k12.il.us/AboutCPS/PressReleases/March_2003/war_3_20_2003.html).

### ***Clark County School District***

<sup>31</sup>Interview with Douglas Wilson, principal of Hollingsworth Elementary School was conducted by phone on July 15, 2004 by Mathew Ferraro.

<sup>32</sup>Interview Dr. Brad Reitz, assistant superintendent in the Student Support Services Division at Clark County School District Headquarters in person by Keisha Toms on Aug. 12, 2004 at 3:00 p.m.

<sup>33</sup>Interview with Elliott Phelps, chief of Clark County School District Police was conducted in person by Keisha Toms on Aug. 11, 2004 at 12:00 p.m.

<sup>34</sup>Wilson interview.

<sup>35</sup>Interview with Jerry Wallace, director of safety education and crisis prevention for Dallas Independent School District was conducted by Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 9, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. local time.

<sup>36</sup>Jerry Wallace "2004-2005 Critical Program Requirements," *Local Safety and Crisis Plan 2004-2005*.

<sup>37</sup>Interview with Jerry Wallace, director of safety education and crisis prevention for Dallas Independent School District was conducted by Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 9, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. local time.

<sup>38</sup>Interview with Jerry Wallace, director of safety education and crisis prevention for Dallas Independent School District was conducted by Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 9, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. local time.

### ***Dallas Independent School District***

<sup>39</sup>Interview with Donovan Collins, executive director of safety and security for Dallas Independent School District was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 12, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. EST.

<sup>40</sup>Interview with Seaborn Phillips, assistant principal at Roosevelt High School, Dallas Independent School District was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 14, 2004.

<sup>41</sup>Mark Hornbeck and Mike Martindale, "Michigan primed to respond to terror attack; Money crunch stretches manpower, but 21 specialized teams in place." (*The Detroit News*, March 3, 2004) A1.

### ***Detroit Public Schools***

<sup>42</sup>Interview with Chief Charles Mitchell of Detroit Public School Safety was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 12, 2004.

<sup>43</sup>Interview with Chief Charles Mitchell of Detroit Public School Safety was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 12, 2004.

<sup>44</sup>Interview with Stephen Hill, executive director of the Office of Risk Management, Detroit Public Schools; Owen Ahern, manager of safety and loss control; and Robert Foley, safety and loss control specialist; and Gary Salmans of MARSH Consulting, USA conducted by Keisha Toms and Matthew Ferraro in person on Aug. 3, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. EST.

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<sup>45</sup>Interview with Harold Watkins, Office of Emergency Management, Detroit Fire Department was conducted by Matthew Ferraro and Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 2, 2004 at 3:15 EST.

<sup>46</sup>Interview with Owen Ahern, manager of safety & loss control in the Office of Risk Management, Detroit Public Schools was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 1, 2004.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with Stanley Waldon, principal of Academy of Fine & Performing Arts, East Elementary School was conducted by Keisha Toms on July 12, 2004.

<sup>48</sup>Interview with Shirley Hightower, principal of Chadsey High School, Detroit Public Schools was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 15, 2004.

<sup>49</sup>Interview with Feda Dawson, principal of Malcolm X Academy was conducted by Keisha Toms by phone on July 15, 2004.

<sup>50</sup>Interview with John DeLora, training and development coordinator, Department of Public Safety, Detroit Public Schools was conducted in person by Matthew Ferraro and Keisha Toms on Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>51</sup>Interview with Harold Watkins, Office of Emergency Management, Detroit Fire Department was conducted by Matthew Ferraro and Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 2, 2004 at 3:15 EST.

<sup>52</sup>Interview with Stephen Hill, executive director of the Office of Risk Management, Detroit Public Schools; Owen Ahern, manager of safety and loss control; and Robert Foley, safety and loss control specialist; and Gary Salmans of MARSH Consulting, USA conducted by Keisha Toms and Matthew Ferraro in person on Aug. 3, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. EST Interview with Harold Watkins, Office of Emergency Management, Detroit Fire Department was conducted by Matthew Ferraro and Keisha Toms in person on Aug. 2, 2004 at 3:15 EST.

<sup>53</sup>Interview with John DeLora, training and development coordinator, Department of Public Safety, Detroit Public Schools was conducted in person by Matthew Ferraro and Keisha Toms on Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>54</sup>Interview with Owen Ahern, manager of safety & loss control, Office of Risk Management was conducted by phone by Keisha Toms on July 1, 2004.

### ***Duval County Public Schools***

<sup>55</sup>Interview with Robert Stratton, acting director of the School Safety Office, Duval County Public Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 15.

<sup>56</sup>Interview with Levi McIntosh, a regional superintendent for Duval County Public Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 4, 2004 at 10:45 a.m. EST.

<sup>57</sup>Interview with Robert Stratton, acting director of the School Safety Office, Duval County Public Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 3, 2004.

<sup>58</sup>Interview with Crystal Lewis, principal of Biscayne Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 20, 2004 at 11:40 p.m. EST.

<sup>59</sup>Robert Stratton, acting director of the School Safety Office, Duval County Public Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 3, 2004.

<sup>60</sup>Interview with Michael Herrington, Duval County Schools Police Chief was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 3, 2004.

### **Fairfax County Public Schools**

<sup>61</sup>Interview with Fred Ellis, director of the Office of Safety and Security, Fairfax County School System was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 8, 2004.

<sup>62</sup>Interview with Susan Fitz, principal of Bren Mar Park Elementary School was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on July 17, 2004 at 12:35 p.m.

<sup>63</sup>Interview with Dale Rumberger, principal of Westfield High School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone in July 2004.

<sup>64</sup>Interview with Paul Regnier, coordinator of community relations, Fairfax County School District was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 9, 2004.

<sup>65</sup>Interview with Dale Rumberger, principal of Westfield High School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone in July 2004.

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<sup>66</sup>Interview with Dr. Mark Glaser, president of Fairfax County Federation of Teachers was conducted by America Prepared Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 9, 2004. Interview with Daniel Meier, principal of Robinson Secondary School was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 16, 2004.

<sup>67</sup>Interview with Dale Rumberger, principal of Westfield High School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone in July 2004.

<sup>68</sup>Interview of Diane Brody, immediate past president of Fairfax County PTA was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 10, 2004.

### ***Gwinnett County Public Schools***

<sup>69</sup>Alvin Wilbanks, CEO/Superintendent of Gwinnett County Public Schools, "School Security is a Commitment, not an Option" (Gwinnett: *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution's Gwinnett Extra*, March 11, 2004). Available online at: website <http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-mainweb>.

<sup>70</sup>Principal Chris Emsley Principal, Duncan Creek Elementary. Interview conducted by America Prepared researcher Courtney Quick by phone in July 2004.

<sup>71</sup>Interview with Frank Daniell, Gwinnett Emergency Management coordinator conducted by phone by Courtney Quick July 12, 2004.

<sup>72</sup>Gwinnett County Public School 2004 Report to the Community. Available on GCPS website <http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/> under "Favorite Resources."

<sup>73</sup>Gwinnett County Public Schools, "Myths and Facts: About Gwinnett County Public School's Emergency Operations Center."

### ***School District of Hillsborough County***

<sup>74</sup>Interview with Superintendent Earl Lennard and Assistant Superintendent for Administration Ken Otero was conducted Allison Phinney in person on Aug. 3, 2004 at 1:00 p.m.

<sup>75</sup>Interview with Jeffrey Eakins, principal of Cypress Creek Elementary School. Interview conducted by phone by America Prepared researcher Courtney Quick in July 2004.

<sup>76</sup>Interview with David Friedberg, chief of Security Services, School District of Hillsborough County, conducted by phone by Courtney Quick on July 26, 2004.

### ***Houston Independent School District***

<sup>77</sup>Interview with John B. Blackburn, chief of School Police, Houston Independent School District was conducted by Rebecca Stogsdill by phone on July 9, 2004.

<sup>78</sup>Interview with Hilbert Bludau, assistant superintendent, Houston Independent School District was conducted by Rebecca Stogsdill by phone on July 8, 2004.

<sup>79</sup>Interview with Adele Rogers, principal of Holland Middle School, Houston Independent School District was conducted by Rebecca Stogsdill by phone.

### ***Los Angeles Unified School District***

<sup>80</sup>Interview Robert Spears, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, Los Angeles Unified School District was conducted by phone by Catharine Livingston by phone on Aug. 24, 2004 at 6:45 p.m. EST.

<sup>81</sup>Interview with Angelo Bellomo, Director, Environmental Health and Safety, Los Angeles Unified School District. Interview conducted by America Prepared researcher Catharine Livingston on July 22, 2004 at 4:45 p.m. EST.

<sup>82</sup>Interview with Angelo Bellomo, Director, Environmental Health and Safety, Los Angeles Unified School District. Interview conducted by America Prepared researcher Catharine Livingston on July 22, 2004 at 4:45 p.m. EST.

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<sup>83</sup>Interview with Martha Cardenas, Parent Community Services Branch, Los Angeles Unified School District conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on Aug. 11, 2004 at 4:45 p.m. EST.

### **Memphis City Schools**

<sup>84</sup>Interview with Samuel Moses, security coordinator for Memphis City School District was conducted by phone by Courtney Quick on July 9, 2004.

<sup>85</sup>Interview with Victoria Matthews, principal of Coleman Elementary School, was conducted by phone by Courtney Quick on July 16, 2004.

### **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

<sup>86</sup>Interview with Peter Cuccaro, former school police chief, Miami-Dade County Public Schools was conducted by phone by Rebecca Stogsdill on June 21, 2004.

<sup>87</sup>Miami-Dade County Public Schools, "Emergency Management Procedures," June 1999. Available online at: <http://www.dadeschools.net/emergency/index.htm>.

<sup>88</sup>Interview with Paula Swope, regional Coordinator for Miami-Dade, Florida Office of Safe and Healthy Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 7, 2004 at 2:30 p.m. EST.

<sup>89</sup>Interview with John S. Dibenedetto, safety coordinator for Dade County School District was conducted by phone Rebecca Stogsdill on June 8, 2004 at 11:50 a.m. EST.

<sup>90</sup>Interview with Patrick J. Doyle, principal of Avocado Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston on July 7, 2004 at 3:45 p.m. EST.

<sup>91</sup>Interview with Monica Cueto, assistant principal of Bent Tree Elementary School was conducted by Catharine Livingston on July 22, 2004 at 9:45 a.m. EST.

<sup>92</sup>Luz M. Navarro, principal of Campbell Drive Middle School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 22, 2004 at 11:10 a.m. EST.

<sup>93</sup>Interview with John S. Dibenedetto, safety coordinator for Dade County School District was conducted by phone Rebecca Stogsdill on June 8, 2004 at 11:50 a.m. EST.

<sup>94</sup>Interview with Paula Swope, regional Coordinator for Miami-Dade, Florida Office of Safe and Healthy Schools was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 7, 2004 at 2:30 p.m. EST.

### **Montgomery County Public Schools**

<sup>95</sup>Edward A. Clarke, Department of School Safety and Security, "Instructions for the Completion of the School Emergency/Crisis Plan Shell, 2004-2005" *Emergency Response Plan: School Safety and Security Under the Incident Command System*. (Rockville, MD: Department of School Safety and Security, Sept. 2003) Introduction.

<sup>96</sup>Montgomery County Public Schools, *Emergency Response Plan: School Safety and Security Under the Incident Command System*. (Rockville, MD: Department of School Safety and Security, Revised September 4, 2003) 9.

<sup>97</sup>Montgomery County Public Schools, *Emergency Response Plan: School Safety and Security Under the Incident Command System*. (Rockville, MD: Department of School Safety and Security, Revised September 4, 2003) 2.

<sup>98</sup>Eric Lichtblau, "The Maryland Shootings: The Investigation: 9/11 Lessons Seen in Reaction to the Sniper" (New York: The New York *Times*, Oct. 9, 2002) 23.

<sup>99</sup>Lichtblau, 23.

<sup>100</sup>Principal interviews conducted between June 16 and July 28. Steve Beatty interview conducted on July 29, 2004 by phone by Keisha Toms. Sandra Rogers interview conducted on June 18, 2004 by Mathew Ferraro.

<sup>101</sup>Interview with Cris Talsania, co-president of Galway Elementary School PTA was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 25, 2004.

<sup>102</sup>Interview with Edward A. Clarke, director of the Department of Safety and Security, Montgomery County Public Schools was conducted by phone by Mathew Ferraro on June 9, 2004.

### **New York City Public Schools**

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<sup>103</sup>Regulations about updating New York City school plans are available on the NYC DOE website, under “Chancellor’s Regulations” <http://docs.nycenet.edu/dscgi/admin.py/Get/File-445/A-414.pdf>

<sup>104</sup>Interview with Francisco Sanchez, assistant principal for security at Evander Childs High School was conducted by Keisha Toms, in person on June 29, 2004.

<sup>105</sup>Interview with Gregory Thomas, director of the Program for School Preparedness and Planning at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health was conducted by Courtney Quick by phone on Aug. 27, 2004.

<sup>106</sup>Richard Perez-Pena, “A Nation at War: New York; A Security Blanket, but with No Guarantees.” (*The New York Times*, March 23, 2003).

<sup>107</sup>Interview with Carl Haynes, president of Teamsters Local 237 was conducted by phone by Courtney Quick on Aug. 12, 2004.

<sup>108</sup>Interview with Stanley Gibson, security guard at South Bronx High School was conducted by Keisha Toms in person on June 28, 2004.

<sup>109</sup>Interview with Dr. Gregory Hodge, principal Frederick Douglass Academy was conducted by Keisha Toms in person on June 29, 2004.

<sup>110</sup>NYPD School Safety Training Unit  
[http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/training/school\\_safety.html](http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/training/school_safety.html).

<sup>111</sup>Several *New York Daily News* articles refer to Benjamin Tucker as the “Security Czar.” See Alison Gendar and David Saltonstall, “Push to School Parents on Evacuation Plans,” (*New York Daily News*, Feb. 14, 2003) and Joe Williams, “The Safety Boss Plumb Tucker-s Out” (*New York Daily News*, April 27, 2004).

<sup>112</sup>Alison Gendar with David Saltonstall, “Push to School Parents on Evacuation Plans” (*New York Daily News*, Feb. 14, 2003).

<sup>113</sup>The 2003-2004 Guide for Parents of New York City Public Schools is available for download at <http://www.nycenet.edu/childrenfirst/CFParentGuide.pdf>.

### **Orange County Public Schools**

<sup>114</sup>Interview with Roger Huder was conducted in person by Courtney Quick on Aug. 8, 2004.

<sup>115</sup>Huder Interview.

<sup>116</sup>Interview with Charles Anderson, Fire Marshal for Orange County Public Schools was conducted over the phone by Courtney Quick Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>117</sup>Anderson Interview.

<sup>118</sup>Anderson Interview.

<sup>119</sup>Interview Richard Harris, Orange County Schools District Safety and Security Director was conducted over the phone by Courtney Quick on Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>120</sup>Interview with Dr. Karen E. Werrenrath, principal of Aloma Elementary School was conducted over the phone by Courtney Quick July 2004.

<sup>121</sup>The Orange County Handbook can be downloaded from <http://www.ocps.k12.fl.us/parent/> by clicking on “parent’s guide” located on left-hand sidebar.

<sup>122</sup>Harris phone interview.

<sup>123</sup>Interview with Michael Ganio, Orange County School District security manager was conducted by phone by Courtney Quick July 12, 2004.

### **School District of Palm Beach**

<sup>124</sup>Kevin Krause, “Chief Builds Force Widely Seen as Model” (Fort Lauderdale: *Sun-Sentinel*, March 3, 2003). Also see Kellie Patrick, “Schools Fear Terror Attack; Most Campus Police Don’t Feel Prepared” (Fort Lauderdale: *Sun-Sentinel* Oct.14, 2002).

<sup>125</sup>Patrick, Oct. 12, 2002.

<sup>126</sup>Randall Murray, “Deep Nap Causes Toxin Scare” (*Jupiter Courier*: Aug. 24, 2003).

<sup>127</sup>Mary Ellen Flannery, “200 Serious Safety Violations found in County Schools,” (*The Palm Beach Post*, Sept. 4, 2001).

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### **School District of Philadelphia**

<sup>128</sup>Interview with Vernard Trent, director of the Office of School Climate and Safety, Philadelphia City School District was conducted by phone by Catharine Livingston on July 13, 2004.

<sup>129</sup>Vernard Trent Interview.

<sup>130</sup>Interview with Joseph McGraw, battalion chief of the Hazardous Materials Administrative Unit, Philadelphia Fire Department was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 2, 2004 at 3:00 p.m.

<sup>131</sup>School District of Philadelphia, *Emergency Response & Crisis Management Plan, 2002-2003*.

<sup>132</sup>Interview with Brendan Lee, special assistant to the chief safety executive, Office of School Climate and Safety, Philadelphia City School District was conducted by Catharine Livingston in person on Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>133</sup>Interview with Anastasia Karloutsos, Special Projects, Office of Parent and Community Relations, Office of School Management, Philadelphia City School District was conducted in person by Catharine Livingston on Aug. 2, 2004.

<sup>134</sup>Interview with Gwendolyn Baggett, assistant principal, E. Washington Rhodes Middle School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on Aug. 11, 2004 at 3:10 p.m.

<sup>135</sup>Interview with Katherine McKinzie, local management officer at Benjamin Franklin High School, Philadelphia City School District was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 30, 2004 at 11:25 a.m.

<sup>136</sup>Interview with Wendy Shapiro, principal of Jules E. Mastbaum High School was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on Aug. 9, 2004 at 10:40 a.m.

<sup>137</sup>Interview with Sandra Hollie, coordinator for emergency response, Philadelphia City School District was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on July 13, 2004.

<sup>138</sup>Brendan Lee Interview.

<sup>139</sup>Anastasia Karloutsos Interview.

<sup>140</sup>Interview with Patricia J Raymond, president of the Home and School Associations, Philadelphia City School District was conducted by Catharine Livingston by phone on Aug. 10, 2004 at 11:50 a.m.

<sup>141</sup>Interview with Paul Socolar, editor and director, *Philadelphia Public School Notebook* and Philadelphia public school parent was conducted by Catherine Livingston, by phone on Aug. 12, 2004 at 10:35 a.m.

### **Prince George's County Public Schools**

<sup>142</sup>Interview with Russell Tedesco, director security services, Prince George's County Public Schools was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 16, 2004.

<sup>143</sup>André Hornsby, Chief Executive Office, Board of Education Prince George's County, "Letter to Parents About Emergency Plans" (Prince George's County Public Schools, Feb. 2004).

<sup>144</sup>Tedesco interview.

<sup>145</sup>Interview with Cynthia Cook was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on July 6, 2004.

### **San Diego City School District**

<sup>146</sup>Interview with Officer Kenneth Hebdon of the San Diego School Police was conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 28, 2004.

<sup>147</sup>Interviews with Richard Roda, administrative lieutenant for San Diego School Police were conducted by phone by Matthew Ferraro on June 17, 2004 and June 21, 2004.

<sup>148</sup>Hebdon Interview.

<sup>149</sup>Interview with Kandra Olsen, director, District Risk Management, San Diego Public Schools was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 24, 2004.

<sup>150</sup>Interview with Mark Marshall, principal of Hardy Elementary School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 28, 2004.

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<sup>151</sup>Interview with Dana Shelburne, principal of La Jolla High School was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on July 7, 2004.

<sup>152</sup>Interview with Steven Barratte, public information officer of San Diego Public Schools was conducted by Matthew Ferraro by phone on June 23, 2004.

<sup>153</sup>Kandra Olsen Interview.

<sup>154</sup>Hebdon interview.

<sup>155</sup>Marshall interview.

<sup>156</sup>Shelburne interview.

## **VII. PUTTING IT ALL INTO CONTEXT**

<sup>157</sup>Durbak interview with Allison Phinney on Aug. 4, 2004.