

Kanawha Putnam Emergency Management Plan Functional Annex

Post Event Reunification Plan

A29

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NRP Coordination:	ESF #2 – Communications
Primary Agency:	Emergency Management
Support Agencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 911 Dispatch Centers ▪ National Weather Service ▪ Law Enforcement ▪ Fire Service ▪ Emergency Medical Services ▪ Media Including Social Media

I Introduction

A Purpose

1. The Post Event Reunification Plan is used to ensure a safe and secure means of accounting for children and reuniting parents/guardians with their children whenever separated as a result of an event at a school facility or other location where children are gathered is rendered unsafe and a remote reunification site is needed.

Other entities such as childcare facilities, businesses, or places of worship should modify the reunification process to meet their operation.

2. If any childcare facility or community must be evacuated for an extended period, children and community members may have to relocate themselves, or when prudent to do so, be safely transported by bus to a designated reunification center. Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) will be informed of the reunification location through mass notification systems including local broadcast media and social media. Once at the reunification center, children will be released to their parents/guardians according to reunification procedures described herein.
3. The Post Event Reunification Plan provides guidance and procedures to manage resources at the local and organizational level. It is important to note, however, that organizations serving children exist within a coordinated structure that can provide vital support and resources for reunification services before, during, and after an event in the impacted area. Sharing this plan and conducting regular drills and exercises with key local and state partners will ensure that coordination occurs when resources are overwhelmed. Sharing should be controlled according to those who have a need to know and the individual sections of this plan.

4. Incidents that can occur which could require reunification to support children, and their families may be either “notice” or “no-notice” events and can be the result of natural, man-made, or technological incidents. “Notice” events are those that can be predicted in advance and which provide time to plan and prepare for an emergency response, such as an impending weather. “No-notice” events are those that happen without warning and require an immediate response with little time to prepare, such as an active shooter in the area. It is important to note that with notice events, action can be taken to evacuate children in advance so that reunification services are less likely to be needed during and following the incident. In contrast, non-notice events limit the ability to return children to their families in advance and, thus, are more likely to result in the need for reunification services to be provided.
5. The phases of response to a notice event include actions prior to the incident that increase readiness and available resources in preparation for the event (See Phase 1 on Figure 1: Phases of Response below.) No-notice events require an immediate response within just a few hours and do not provide the opportunity to increase readiness in response to an elevated threat or to preposition resources in response to what is deemed a credible threat.

Phase 1 Pre-incident	Phase 2 Response	Phase 3 Recovery
Phase 1a: Normal Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention • Mitigation • Plans • Exercises • Public information 	Phase 2a: Immediate Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation, Mobilization • Protective actions • Assessment • Determine staging areas • Develop support plan 	Phase 3a: Short Term Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration
Phase 1b: Elevated Threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased readiness • Coordinate threat information 	Phase 2b: Deployment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployment • Movement to staging areas 	Phase 3b: Intermediate Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition
Phase 1c: Credible Threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-position resources 	Phase 2c: Sustained Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment 	Phase 3c: Long Term Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuilding

Source: Multi-Agency Reunification Services Plan Template, Version 1; prepared by FEMA and the Red Cross; May 1, 2015, p.10.

Figure 1: Phases of Response

6. A predetermined, practiced reunification plan ensures that the reunification process will simplify and standardize the response to what is probably already a chaotic, anxiety-filled scene. Putting an orderly reunification plan into action will help defuse the heightened emotions at the site. Further, going through the planning and training process may help strengthen relationships between the facility, first responders, local law enforcement, EMS, local health departments, fire departments, and other emergency response agencies, which can prove invaluable in responding to an actual emergency.

B. Scope of Activity

1. This plan applies to all children, facilities, parents/guardians, and emergency support providers. Other annexes that may apply are Communications, Evacuation, Public Information, and Accountability.
2. Mutual aid agreements (MAA) or memorandums of understanding (MOU) should be in place with several alternate locations to ensure the safety and security of children, faculty, and staff. In the

event children are evacuated and transported to a reunification site, parents/guardians will be notified via phone, email, text messaging, or other mass media.

3. The Post Event Reunification Plan describes the coordination steps and implementation procedures necessary to enable response to the reunification needs of the children and their families who are affected by the event.
4. This plan also describes:
 - a. Response capabilities and strategy of the reunification plan participants to implement reunification services and meet the needs of affected children.
 - b. Legal responsibilities, roles, and tasks of the various organizations/agencies who may participate in reunification operations.
 - c. This section contains a list of the conditions that may have a significant impact on the success of the plan.
 - d. A breakdown of specific populations and related challenges and resources to consider in reunification plans.
 - e. Methods for implementing reasonable accommodations that will allow individuals with disabilities, children with special needs, and individuals with limited English proficiency to access reunification services.
 - f. Methods for scaling up operations and integration of State, national agencies and other organizations into the response if the scale of an emergency warrants it.
 - g. The provision of support and crisis counseling for mental health, bereavement, grief, and other needs of those suffering long-term separation or loss of loved one following an event.

II. Situation

There are a wide variety of emergency situations that might require child/parent or guardian reunification. Child/parent/guardian reunification may be needed if a community site is evacuated or closed because of hazards impacting the area of an ongoing event emergency.

III Assumptions

- A. Some parent(s) / guardian(s) will refuse to cooperate with the reunification process.
- B. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may be emotional when arriving at the reunification site(s).
- C. While some emergency situations are slow to develop, others occur without warning. Hence, there may be little time for deliberate child/parent/guardian reunification. In fast moving incidents, child / parent / guardian reunification will be conducted with minimal preparation time. In the case of short notice, there may be little time to obtain personnel and equipment from external sources to support reunification operations.
- D. People other than those on the child's emergency release form will try to pick up children during an emergency.
- E. Some parent(s) / guardian(s) will arrive without the needed forms or documentation.

- F. Reunification of some children with their parents or guardians may take longer than expected.
- G. Depending on the hazard, reunification can take place inside the involved facility or at a distant site.
- H. Prior to an identified situation, local emergency management personnel, State and Federal agencies, voluntary organizations, the private sector, and the school system will have coordinated to understand and define their respective reunification roles, responsibilities, capabilities, and capacity.
- I. Certain basic assumptions will serve as the foundation for the reunification coordination effort. Reunification services will be needed in some capacity after nearly every incident. In small incidents, the event may be managed entirely at the organizational level. In larger events, reunification needs may be met through the deployment of personnel from local support organizations. In large or catastrophic incidents, reunification needs may exceed the resources and capability of any one organization, requiring a combination of resources provided by local, State, or Federal agencies and the private sector.
- J. Planning efforts should include children with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, as well as service animals.
- K. A streamlined process for parent/guardian access to reunification systems, as well as coordinated public messaging about availability and accessibility of reunification services to children and their families, will lessen public confusion and result in more effective reunification outcome.
- L. Reunification activities are dependent upon adequate communication and technology infrastructure, including telephone, cellular phones, and/or internet to connect with email and social media.
- M. Public messages supporting reunification are thorough, timely, accurate, accessible, and compliant with all legal requirements for individuals with disabilities, children with special needs, individuals with limited English proficiency and others with access and functional needs.
- N. Mass casualty incidents will require enhanced coordination among reunification operations, health care facilities, and potentially morgues and/or funeral homes in the unfortunate event that fatalities occur.
- O. Support and crisis counseling for behavioral health, bereavement, grief, and other needs will be available for those individuals suffering long-term separation or loss of loved ones and for workers providing reunification services to children and their families.
- P. Agencies have established policies and procedures for working with families with functional and access needs and will use these to support the response.

IV Training and Exercises

- A. Key to the effective utilizing of the Post Event Reunification Plan is participation in regular training and emergency exercises to ensure that all parties are familiar with the procedures to be followed. Two types of training are necessary to ensure that a Post Event Reunification Plan can be activated and operated successfully.
 - 1. First, those people who have been pre-identified for key positions should be trained in advance to perform effectively.
 - a. Training should include review of the Plan, and walk-through of all aspects of reunification operations, from activation to demobilization. It is desirable to cross-train potential personnel in the various functions associated with reunification.

- b. This basic training should include the fundamentals of the National Incident Management Systems' (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS). Personnel should be trained in ICS 100 (Introduction to Incident Command System) and ICS 700 (Introduction to National Incident Management System) and should regularly participate in Reunification Plan training exercises. It is also recommended that school or childcare personnel participating in the reunification take IS-100 SCA: Introduction to Incident Management for Schools.
2. Second, Just-in-Time (JIT) Training materials should be included in the facility specific Reunification Plan.
 - a. The purpose of JIT Training is to refresh the knowledge of those people who have been pre-trained, and to provide people with no prior training with the tools to perform their assigned functions.
 - b. JIT Training should cover all aspects of the reunification operation.
 - c. A unit or individual, identified by position title, should be designated to coordinate training activities.
 - d. Training should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis and documented. In addition to regular training, tabletop and other discussion-oriented exercises should be used to familiarize personnel with plans, including recent updates. Drills, functional and full-scale exercises provide opportunities for planners to test responders in a tactical manner and ideally should include interaction with external partners, such as local emergency personnel.

V Plan Activation

- A. The Post Event Reunification Plan should be activated as soon as possible following notification of an event that impacts the facility and leads to the need for reunification service. Initiating reunification can result from any abnormal occurrence at an organization's facility or in the surrounding area, including power or phone outages, weather events, hazmat incidents, bomb threats, criminal activity in the area, or active violence at the facility.
- B. The Post Event Reunification Plan development process and maintenance activity described above take place during the pre-incident phase of emergency operations (Phase 1 as shown in Figure 1: Phases of Response). Once a credible threat of an incident has occurred requiring reunification support for the children, the response phase (Phase 2) begins with the activation of the Post Event Reunification Plan by the designated authority and mobilization of personnel.
- C. During the planning process, the primary Reunification Center Director responsible for reunification management will be identified. They are authorized to activate the plan and carry out reunification operations as described. Secondary and tertiary alternates for this and all positions should be identified to ensure efficient activation of the Plan in an emergency.
- D. Plan activation and escalation is assumed to be conducted in compliance with ICS procedures. Position titles listed in the following chart reflect an ICS-compliant activation. As an incident evolves, first responders establish their own Incident Command and school officials will become part of a "Unified Command." While the responding Law Enforcement department or agency will likely assume primary Incident Command, custodial organizations remain responsible for reunifying children with their parents/guardians.
- E. Notifying community partners of the planned activation, particularly public safety officials, and partner agencies, is a key component of managing an efficient reunification effort, often in chaotic crisis situations. By creating or strengthening partnerships between school officials and first responder

agencies - police, fire and medical - it becomes easier to engage the first responders and other key participants in the event of an actual emergency. The Liaison Officer should contact the key partners. In a broader incident involving multiple parties and the establishment of an Emergency Operations Center, the County School Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Reunification Center PIO should contact the Incident PIO and initiate coordination with the Joint Information System (JIS being established for the overall emergency situation).

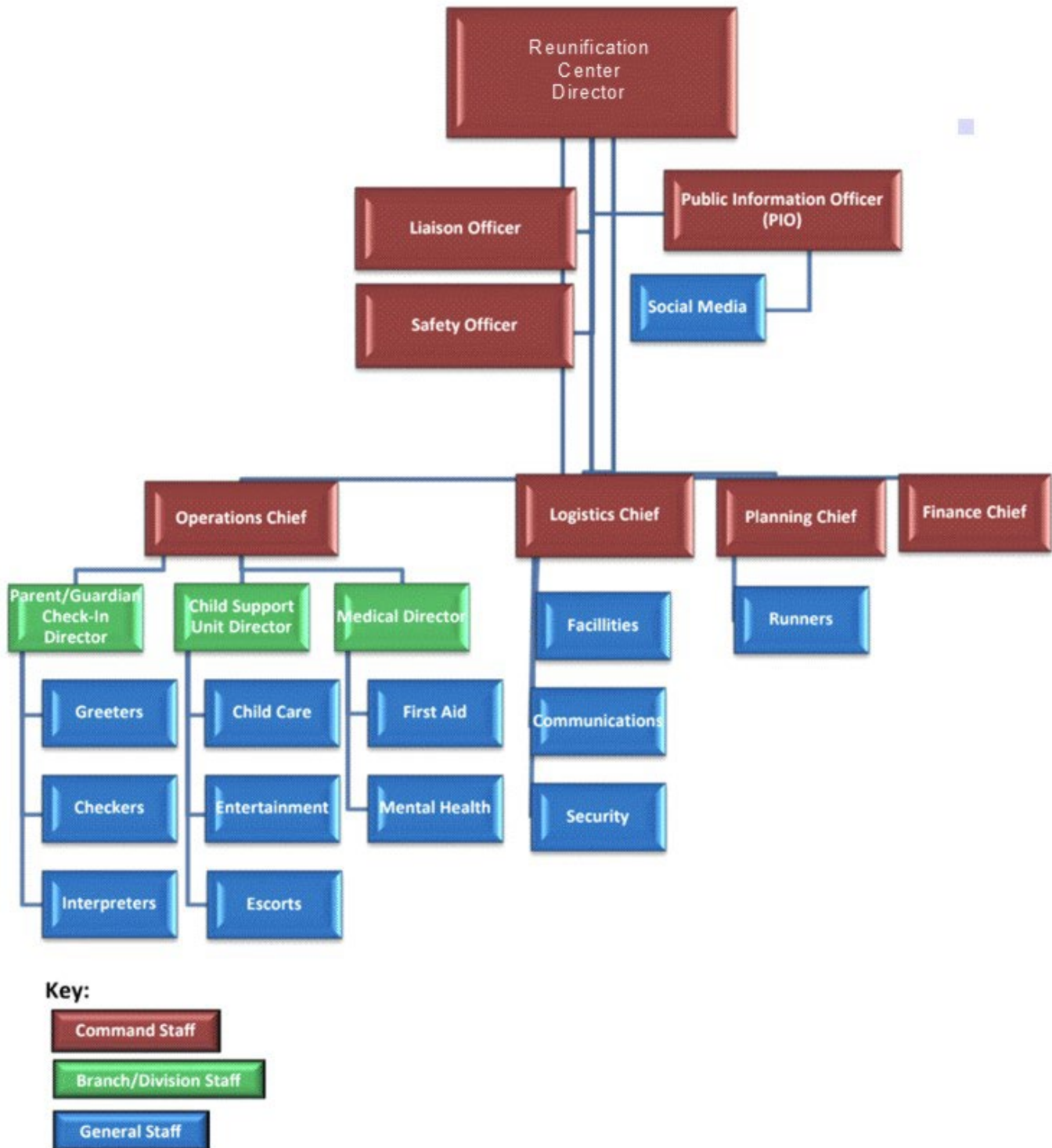


Figure 2: Typical Incident Command (ICS) Chart for a Post Event Reunification Center

VI Mobilizing Staff

- A. Initial activation should include minimum staffing for reunification functions and provide escalation of staffing as required. The Reunification Center Director and the Operations Chief should review the ICS organizational chart in Figure 2 above and adjust as necessary to manage the emergency circumstances using available staff.
- B. The Reunification Center Director, Operations Chief, and Planning Chief should determine staffing needs for full operations of the Reunification Center based on the number of children that would need to be reunified, the nature of the incident, the facility's proximity to the incident, the expected length of the emergency, etc. Based on anticipated staffing needs, sufficient copies of the Job Action Sheet(s) should be prepared (in both digital and hard copy formats) for distribution to the staff when they register for service in the Reunification Center.
- C. Staff for the Reunification Center Team may come from a combination of sources, all of whom should have had CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) /SORI (Sexual Offender Record Information) checks completed in advance.
 - 1. Existing School Personnel
 - a. These people will be known and already vetted by normal standard operating procedures and will have appropriate badges and identification.
 - 2. Pre-credentialed volunteer staff
 - a. These people have a known history with volunteering. They should be issued an identification badge authorizing entrance into the facility.
 - 3. Staff from "trusted sources."
 - a. This would include, for example, mental health staff and social workers provided by DHHR, Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, etc. These persons will have been vetted and credentialed by their "home organization; however, they should be issued Reunification Center badges since healthcare staff may not know them.
 - b. Depending on the nature of the incident and available resources, individual staff positions may be assigned to fulfill more than one role in the reunification process.
 - c. Due to the sensitivity of reunification operations, it is recommended that staff be from these trusted sources only. No "spontaneous" volunteers should be permitted in the Reunification Center.
 - d. The Reunification Center Director and Operations Chief should work with Planning and the communications staff to implement pre-determined mechanisms for notifying staff of mobilization and for issuing alerts as the incident unfolds over time.
 - e. Critical supplies and equipment should be pre-identified for the interior and exterior site layout. The location of needed supplies and equipment should be identified in the plan, as well as existing procedures for the acquisition of additional supplies.

VII Logistical Requirement(s)

- A. Upon activation, the Reunification Center Director should immediately coordinate with the Operation and Logistics Chiefs to ensure that the setup of the Reunification Center occurs in an efficient and timely manner. They should initiate a review of interior and exterior site layout that identify the areas within the facility (including alternates) to be used for the various activities associated with the reunification and work with the Logistics Chief and Facilities staff to execute a set-up strategy for each area. See Attachment 5 for internal and external site layout.
- B. Logistics should set up supplies first in the following key areas to facilitate an efficient activation of the reunification service:
 - 1. Children's Safe Area with secure restroom access.
 - 2. Parent/Guardian Check-in Area out of the line of sight where the children will be located.
 - 3. Counseling Area with restroom access separate from the children.
 - 4. Accessible Medical/First Aid Area with resources for children and parents/guardians with special or medical needs, ideally near a door with outside access.
- C. Once these key areas are equipped and staffed, supplies and equipment can then be set up in the areas designated for reunification, law enforcement interviews, media staging, etc. Logistics should work with Safety/Security Officers to set up signage and traffic controls both outside and inside the Reunification Center to maintain physical separation between the public, parents/guardians, and children.

If possible, Logistics should pre-position critical supplies and equipment in the designated Reunification Center area(s) identified on interior and exterior site layout. Where pre-positioning of supplies is not feasible, the Logistics Chief should identify the location of new supplies and equipment. The Logistics Chief should review and initiate a procurement strategy for obtaining additional supplies and equipment, if needed, in coordination with the Finance Chief. The Post Event Reunification Plan Equipment List (Attachment 1) identifies equipment (hardware/software) that is critical to the successful implementation of the reunification plan.

D. Prepare for Reunification Center Activation and Operation

- A. Conduct Staff Registration
 - 1. The Reunification Center Director and Safety/Security Officer should establish the standard procedure for staff registration/credentialing and sign-in and ensure that these protocols are consistently followed. All volunteer staff should also be issued badges or other identification authorizing access to the Reunification Center. Unique apparel such as hats or vests would assist facility staff and family members in identifying reunification staff and pre-credentialed volunteers.
 - 2. Just in Time (JIT) Training should be conducted by the Operations and or Logistics Chiefs for all staff at the beginning of each shift and/or when any new staff member is assigned. This is important not only for staff unfamiliar with Reunification Center operations but also for previously trained staff who may need refresher training.
 - a. JIT Training should address the overall mission and objectives of the Reunification Center.
 - b. JIT Training for specific positions should address:
 - 1) Need to document everything.

- 2) Basic ICS protocols: who they report to and who reports to them.
 - 3) Job Action Sheet(s) (Available from the I Love U Guys web site).
 - 4) Volunteer Code of Conduct (See Attachment 4).
 - 5) Reunification Center Layout (interior and exterior site plans) (See Attachment 5).
 - 6) Organization chart with positions and missions to include who reports to whom (See Attachment 6).
 - 7) Documents and forms that will be utilized by the position (See Attachment 7).
 - 8) Fact Sheet regarding Reunification Center operation.
3. The Reunification Center Director must approve all public messages before release. The Reunification Center Public Information Officer (PIO) should establish outgoing messaging procedures, supervise the set-up of a Media Area separate from the children and families, and prepare emergency notifications/press releases for use throughout the incident. Public messaging procedures and sample notifications should be shared with all staff at the initial training and updated over the course of the emergency event. All staff should be reminded that all media inquiries should be referred to the PIO and sensitive information should not be broadcast over emergency radios and should be shared only on an as-needed basis using phones or escorts to protect the privacy of the children and families involved. In a broader incident involving multiple parties and the establishment of an Emergency Operations Center, the Reunification Center PIO should coordinate with the Incident PIO and participate in a Joint Information System (JIS). The JIS should include all the active PIOs for the event (e.g., from local law enforcement, local schools, municipal officials, etc.)
 4. Another separate overflow waiting area may be needed for other concerned family members and interested parties, located out of the sight of the Reunification Center operation. Only parents or legal guardians with appropriate identification should be allowed into the Reunification Center. However, many other family members may be concerned about the welfare of the children in question, and they will naturally flock to the organization's facility when an incident is occurring. Estimates of the numbers of concerned relatives expected to show up in a crisis range from 9 to 18 per child, suggesting a potential need for crowd control when large numbers of interested individuals show up.

E. Operations

A. Family Notification

1. In the event of a reunification operation, parent/guardian notification is the priority first step. Many organizations have outgoing notification systems to call the parent/guardian population. It is imperative that accurate, factual information be delivered, starting with the crucial First Message. While it may seem comforting to tell parents/guardians that everyone is okay, or to minimize the number of injuries, this First Message not only begins the recovery process, but it may also be evidentiary for purposes of liability. Rather than saying "All children are safe," it is probably more accurate to report that, "We are in the process of establishing the safety status of all children and staff."
2. Notifications to parents/guardians should include a reminder to bring a Government issued photo identification with them to the reunification site and have it out and ready to show at the Check-in Area. With the number of cell phones available to ever-younger populations parents/guardians will likely be the first to arrive at the impacted facility. Prepare for the fact that this may occur prior to the transmission of any official notification by an official entity. Children will call or text their parents/guardians immediately during a crisis, despite policies prohibiting mobile phone use.
3. Additionally, some organizations may not have accurate contact information for all parents/guardians. It may be possible during a crisis to leverage this to the reunification lead's advantage by writing out reunification information for children to text to their parents/guardians.

Children are also asked not to send multiple text messages either in or out of the facility or reunification area to keep the cellular network open during reunification operations. Pre-prepared notification messages are vital. While anything written in advance may not exactly fit the circumstances of any given crisis, it will save time in the initial phase of the crisis. These statements can be vetted with the Public Information Officer and legal counsel as part of the planning process. Other notifications should also be considered. Contacting legal counsel, as well as its insurance providers, should be part of the notification process.

B. Family Registration

1. For parents/guardians, there are a couple of steps in the reunification process. If a parent/guardian is driving to the Reunification Center, greater awareness of traffic and emergency vehicles is advised.
 - a. Parents/guardians should park where indicated and not abandon vehicles. Drive along the indicated traffic pattern.
 - b. Parents/guardians are asked to go to the Reunification Parent/Guardian Check-In Area and form lines based on the first letter of their child's last name.
 - c. While in line, parents/guardians are asked to fill out a Reunification Information Form. Some of the same information is repeated on both the top and separated bottom of the card. Parents/guardians are asked to complete all parts of the card (See Attachment 7, Reunification Information Form).
 - d. There are some expectations parents or guardians should be aware of:
 - 1) Bring identification that will streamline things during reunification.
 - 2) Be patient! Reunification is a process that protects both the safety of the child and provides for an accountable change of custody from the school or county agency to a recognized custodial parent or guardian.
 - 3) The Parent/Guardian Check-In Area should be staffed by authorized personnel. There are several strategies for identifying custodial privileges during reunification.
 - a) The "Whitelist method" confirms the parent/guardian via photo identification confirming the person's authority by comparing the ID to the child demographic card provided to the organization. The benefit of this method is absolute accountability. The cost is greater time, and greater human resources needs to check the identification against enrollment records.
 - b) The "Blacklist method" relies on a predetermined list of persons with custodial restrictions. Identification is used, in this case, to determine if preventing release to the non-custodial parent/guardian is necessary. In some cases, parents/guardians may not have photo identification. Sometimes ID can be verified by the child's service provider or other staff.
 - c) Another option is to solicit little known information about the child. The Standard Reunification Card has space for the child's birthday. The area for this is on the Escort's part of the card which can be verified against the demographic/enrollment card during a Whitelist custody verification, or it can be confirmed by the child when the Escort retrieves them from the Children's Safe Area.

C. Reunification

1. The following is a description of the operations of the Reunification Center. Establish a Parent/Guardian Check-In Location. Deliver the children to the Assembly Area out of the field of vision of parents/guardians. "Greeters" direct parents/guardians to the Parent/Guardian Check-In location and help them understand the process. Instruct parents/guardians on how to complete Reunification Information Form. Once the Form is complete, give the bottom portion to an escort

who will bring the child from the Child Assembly Area. Control lines of sight to allow for communication and other issues to be handled with diminished drama or anxiety. Anticipate medical or investigative contingency. Most organizations use a demographic card to retain information on each child. Ideally, it is beneficial to separate the information into multiple binders separated alphabetically to be distributed to staff dealing with families whose children's names begin with a particular letter. By separating demographic cards into smaller groups, the process tends to move faster, and the goal of reunification is greatly accelerated. The system should be focused on the ease-of-use for stress-filled incoming parents/guardians and the Reunification Center staff assisting them.

D. Support Services

1. In addition to facilitating reunification, the mission of the Reunification Center includes the facilitation of support services to family members. The Health Support Unit coordinates the facilitation of support services to children and their families. The provision of psychological first aid and mental health/behavioral health services provided to children, family members and Reunification Center staff is a key element in organizing short and long-term health consequences of disasters.

E. Communication

1. Communication is a key element of managing an emergency requiring reunification services. Communication includes information sharing among responders and staff as well as public information and risk communications.
2. Once the initial notifications are sent out to the community and to children's families, there will be an ongoing need to monitor the evolving situation and keep everyone informed of the status of both the emergency incident and the reunification process as well as control rumors. There are several aspects of this ongoing effort, including general public messaging procedures for media and social media, communications with staff, and sharing information with emergency preparedness officials.
3. Because of the extreme sensitivity of information concerning children, HIPAA and FERPA policies, and the damage that can occur as a result of inaccurate or premature release of information, Reunification Center staff should exercise great care in safeguarding information and disseminating appropriately only under the supervision of the Public Information Officer.
4. A few general rules apply to information handling and dissemination:
 - a. Disseminate information only to persons with a "need to know."
 - b. Disseminate information about children only when authorized by proper authority.
 - c. Sensitive information should not be transmitted by radio, landline, or cellular telephone if it can be avoided.
 - d. Only transmit sensitive information on the Internet via password-protected systems.
 - e. Conduct verbal communications in a location and manner that ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear them.
 - f. Use plain language. Speak clearly and slowly; avoid codes, abbreviations, acronyms and jargon.
 - g. Be concise and be brief.
 - h. Obtain pre-approval from the Incident Commander before releasing any public messaging.
 - i. Assume that all written communications could be made public.
5. This Reunification Plan outlines a communication policy aimed at keeping staff informed of key decisions and updates.
 - a. Internal staff communication may include:

1. Staff briefings, which will occur at the beginning of each operational period or shift change, or as a result of an occurrence of an event that must be conveyed immediately to all staff.
2. Unit, Team and Group meetings. Called at the discretion of their supervisors.
3. One-on-one and informal communications.
4. When communicating with other staff not in your unit, or in another physical location, verify and document the name, unit, position title, and exchange information.
5. In addition, during the event, local officials should be kept apprised of the status of the reunification process and any changes in the situation. If there is a law enforcement element to the situation, Reunification Center staff should maintain similar contact with those officials as well so that everyone is operating with the same situational awareness.
6. In the event of a broader event, it is probable that an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will have been activated under the authority of an Incident Commander.
 - a. Communications with the EOC should occur at a peer level.
 - b. The Reunification Center Public Information Officer should handle all communications with the media. All staff should be cautioned not to provide information to any media representative without specific authorization from the PIO. A Media Center or area for media contacts, interviews, and briefings should be designated away from the reunification activities.
 - c. Communications via social media have become increasingly important in our society. While extremely valuable for communications purposes, communication via social media is virtually impossible to control, and is subject to misunderstanding and dissemination of misinformation. Social media is also a common source of rumors and speculation. Staff should adhere to their facility's established social media policy. If no such policy exists, facilities should seek to minimize the potential harm of dissemination of misinformation via social media by:
 - (i) Urging family members to refrain from disseminating information concerning children's conditions or other sensitive information.
 - (ii) Directing staff to refrain from disseminating information concerning the Reunification Center, family members, or children via social media.
 - (iii) Requesting staff and family members to advise the Reunification Center Public Information Officer (PIO) if they discover inappropriate information concerning the Reunification Center, family members, or children via social media.
 - (iv) Advising staff and family members to be alert to rumors or speculation being disseminated via social media, and to inform the Reunification Center PIO of any occurrence.
 - (v) The ICS organizational chart includes a Social Media Coordinator (often a Twitter or other social media user), reporting to the Public Information Officer.

F. Demobilization

A. Authorizing Demobilization of Post Event Reunification Center

1. During the planning process, the primary Reunification Center Director responsible for reunification management is authorized to activate the plan, carry out reunification operations as described in this Plan, and have primary authority to determine when demobilization is appropriate.
2. The Reunification Center Director should assess the status of the ongoing emergency and review a list of "triggers" for demobilizing the Reunification Center.
3. Examples of triggers for demobilization include:
 - a. fewer than three families remaining in the Reunification Center

b. no unaccompanied minors remaining.

4. These are suggested trigger points, but it should be clearly understood that the decision to demobilize is a subjective one and will depend on the circumstances of a given crisis. Wherever possible, the Reunification Center Director should consult with local emergency preparedness officials and other key partners while determining if the time is right to demobilize the Reunification Center. This communication will be especially critical in the event of a widespread emergency.

B. Notify Stakeholder(s)

1. As soon as the decision to demobilize the Reunification Center has been made by the Reunification Center Director, and the demobilization date and time are decided, all participant agencies, family members at the Reunification Center, local emergency preparedness officials and other key partners should be notified.

C. Disseminate Final Media Message(s)

1. The Reunification Center Director should provide all relevant information to the Public Information Officer to prepare messaging regarding the demobilization.
2. The plan should indicate when demobilization information is appropriate to go out on all media platforms that have been operational during the emergency, including public media outlets and social media platforms. Reunification Center staff should particularly ensure the information is provided in formats accessible to people with disabilities or those who have other access and functional needs.

D. Close Out Operation

1. Return all equipment and supplies to the appropriate storage area or other location.
2. Collect and secure all forms, checklists, and other written material utilized in the Reunification Center and give them to the Operations Chief for disposition.

E. Conduct After-Action Analysis

1. As soon as possible following demobilization, a debrief should be scheduled to identify and document “lessons learned” and to recommend changes in the plan if indicated. This debrief is often referred to as an “after-action report” (AAR) and is a key element of the ongoing review and maintenance of the Post Event Reunification Plan, as well as of emergency planning in general.
2. Everyone inside the organization and in the community that participated in the reunification effort should participate in the AAR. This should include the staff of the Reunification Center, other organization officials, community partners and local emergency preparedness officials, as well as representatives of the parents/guardians involved and the children themselves, where possible. The AAR should document significant events and issues, positive and negative concerning Reunification Center operations.

XI. Concept of Operations Reunification Center

A. General

1. In planning for child/parent/guardian reunification, the characteristics of the hazard and its magnitude, intensity, speed of onset, and anticipated duration are all significant factors. These causal factors will determine size, scope, and complexity of the reunification process.
2. The county must be prepared to conduct both small-scale and large-scale reunification at all times

of the day both from known hazard areas and from unexpected incident locations.

3. Reunification staff including team leaders and the site coordinator may be staffed by existing staff such as school administrators, nurses and/or contracted mental health personnel, etc.
4. Child/Parent/Guardian Reunification Team members will be located in the following areas:
 - a. The first area, the “child holding area,” will be where children will wait for their parents/guardians.
 - b. The second area, “parent check-in,” is where parent(s)/guardian(s) will arrive to be reunited with the child. This is where staff ensure proper vetting takes place. Vetted parent(s)/guardian(s) are then escorted to a “parent/guardian holding area.”
 - c. This final area is where staff will then separately escort the child and the parent/guardian from holding to reunite them in the “reunification area” for release.
5. Child Holding Area Operations – If the event reunification occurs during school hours designated classroom teachers will remain with their assigned children in the holding area, but if the event occurs outside of school operations, then child hold area staff will be designated. Each will have the list of the children assigned to their supervision, including the exact name of their parents. Anyone who was absent at the start of the school day or who departed prior to the incident will be noted.
6. Parent/Guardian Check-in Operations – When a parent/guardian arrives, they will be asked for the name of the child being picked up. The parent will then be required to show proof of their identification (driver’s license or other government issued photo identification). When the staff member confirms the parent/guardian identity and authority to pick up the child, the staff member will use a runner or a radio/cellular telephone to notify the child assembly area that the designated child is to be escorted to the reunification area. When the child and parent/guardian report to the reunification area, the staff member will have the parent/guardian sign for the child on the child Reunification Information Form. Then the child will be released to the parent.
7. If the child has been hospitalized or is deceased, staff will not indicate the status of the child but will escort the parent/guardian to the mental health counseling area. The “mental health counseling area” will be staffed by counselors and/or others trained in death notifications.
8. Mental Health Counseling Area – Counselors and/or death notification trained persons will be responsible for notifying parent(s)/ guardian(s) that their child is not available for pick-up for any of the following reasons: injured, dead, arrested, witness, etc.
9. The staff members will:
 - a. Provide available information regarding the child in a sensitive way.
 - b. Will assure the parent/guardian that everything possible is being done to safeguard their child or their child’s remains.
 - c. Will inform the parent/guardian who to contact to obtain additional further information about how they will be reunited with their child or arrange release of the remains.
 - d. Will assist the parent/guardian with their trauma.
 - e. Will make available to parents/guardians a means of communicating with other family members and friends.
 - f. Will protect the parent/guardian from media representatives.
 - g. When necessary, staff will call those parent(s)/guardian(s) who have not picked up their child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, Children and Youth Social Services will be notified.

B. Traffic Control

1. The flow of traffic at the reunification site must be controlled.
2. Traffic routes must allow for continued access by emergency vehicles.
3. Where time permits, traffic control devices, such as signs and barricades, may be utilized.

4. The need to clear disabled/illegally parked vehicles by wrecker services will be directed to Law Enforcement.

C. Warning & Public Information

1. Parents, guardians, and public warning or notification will take place via:
 - a. School Messenger,
 - b. Social Media, and
 - c. Local Broadcast Media.

D. Access Control & Security

1. During reunification, the security of the reunification site is extremely important.
2. Staff and children shall be protected and kept safe.
3. The child/Parent Reunification Team, School-based Law enforcement, or local law enforcement should establish access control points to limit unauthorized access.
4. Reunification site security is obtained and maintained via multilayers of control. Elements of this multilayered control include:
 - a. Upon arrival at site, conduct a security sweep of the exterior and interior to ensure the scene is safe.
 - b. Using the reunification flow recommendations.
 - c. Monitor, maintain, and refine access control and security measures as needed.
5. In the event the primary or secondary reunification sites become unusable, obtain and adapt a site-specific Traffic-Access Control Plan for use at the improvised site.

E. Action by Phases of Emergency Management

1. Mitigation
 - a. Where possible, undertake mitigation for known hazards that have in the past led to situations requiring reunification.
 - b. Seek improvement to preplanned holding areas if needed.
 - c. Enhance warning systems to increase warning times and reduce the need for hasty evacuations.
2. Preparedness
 - a. Identify primary and alternate reunification staff and team leaders.
 - b. Prepare reunification staff through training, drills and exercises.
 - c. Identify primary and secondary reunification sites and prepare facility layouts, traffic /access control plans, and public information and communications plans.
 - d. Obtain a memorandum of understanding for the use of the facilities.
 - e. Prepare notification message templates to parent(s)/guardian(s) and the public.
 - f. Send letters home to parent(s) / guardian(s) at the beginning of the school year to describe the reunification process.
 - g. Prepare reunification kits and identify storage location and maintenance schedule.
3. Response
 - a. Setup and staff family reunification center.
 - b. Prepare for the arrival of parents/guardians.
 - c. Check documentation to release children to parents/guardians.
 - d. Reunite families.

- e. Inform families of missing, injured or lost children.
 - f. Provide mental health and counseling support to families and other involved citizens.
4. Recovery
- a. Return building to pre-reunification conditions.
 - b. Take photos or make notes of any damage to property.
 - c. Coordinate temporary supervision for those whose parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be contacted.
 - d. If needed, provide transportation to those who can return to the incident scene for vehicles or require transportation home, such as school staff or other reunification site staff.
 - e. Continue public information updates to parent(s)/guardian(s) and the media.

XII. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

A. General

1. In the case of a school-based incident the Superintendent has the general responsibility for recommending evacuation or school closure, when that is the most suitable means of protecting the staff and children from hazard. If the situation occurs outside of school operations, then the County Emergency Operations Plan should be activated and evacuation procedures followed as directed by the plan.
2. The School Principal has the authority to recommend protective actions for their school building or incident scene when deemed necessary. At other facilities, a response coordinator and alternate shall be identified to coordinate response activity for the outside agencies.
3. The hazard situation which gave rise to the need for reunification should be continually monitored in case changing circumstances, such as an increase in rainfall or wind shift, changes the potential impact area and thus the area that is being used for reunification.

B. Facility Response Coordinator

1. After consulting with an emergency Incident Commander (police, fire or other emergency official), if applicable, determine the appropriate pre-designated relocation site(s).
2. The School Principal or Facility Response Coordinator in most cases will not be at the Reunification Site but remain at the event scene as part of the Unified Command with Emergency Services and Law Enforcement.
3. Designate a Reunification Center Director.
4. Ensure PIO keeps the media informed of media briefing locations.
5. Follow predetermined parental/guardian notification procedures such as phone trees, local media channels, automated alert systems, cell or text messaging, etc.

C. Reunification Site

1. Reunification Center Director
 - a. Acts as the “Incident Commander” of the Post Event Reunification Center
 - b. Establish a reunification site as requested by the Incident Commander.
 - c. Follow predetermined procedures for releasing children.
 - d. Request personnel to staff the reunification site(s).

- e. Notify a contact person at the relocation site(s) to prepare for the arrival of children.
 - f. Ensure all staff wear badges/vests.
 - g. Check the identification of all non-uniformed personnel who arrive to assist.
 - h. Identify reunification staff team leaders for major functional areas to include Welcome Staff Team Leader, Parent/Guardian Check-in Staff Team Leader, Child Holding Area Operations Team Leader, Mental Health Counseling Area Team Leader, and Reunification Area Team Leader. Provide briefings on their role and responsibilities.
 - i. Provide periodic briefings to parent(s)/guardians(s) in the holding area.
2. Welcome Staff Team Leader
- a. Supervise and review instructions with welcome staff describing their role.
 - b. All parent(s)/guardian(s) picking up children must show proper identification.
 - c. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may only sign out their own child.
 - d. Prior to parent(s) / guardian(s) reaching the Parent/Guardian Check-in Operation Area, welcome staff should provide the following information:
 - 1) Provide parents/guardians with a letter describing the reunification process.
 - 2) Explain the parent/guardian will need a photo identification and will need to be on the emergency release form that identifies who can pick up their child.
 - 3) Provide a Reunification Information Form to complete.
 - 4) Direct parent(s)/guardian(s) to the appropriate lines for check-in.
 - 5) Calm waiting parents/guardians and explain that an orderly process is required for the safety of the children.
3. Parent/Guardian Check-in Team Leader (Reception Staff)
- a. Supervise and review instructions with parent/guardian check-in staff describing their process and procedures.
 - b. Using school binders, receive parent(s)/guardian(s) according to alphabet, school, or grade.
 - c. Receive form from parent(s)/guardian(s) and check photo identification.
 - d. Check the school emergency release form on who can pick up children or similar documents for use outside of school operating hours.
 - e. Have individuals previously identified on school emergency release form sign release form.
 - f. Request parent/guardian to report to Parent Holding Area.
 - g. Continue to receive updates on child status/accountability.
4. Child Holding Area Team Leader
- a. Verify all child holding areas have been perused for safety.
 - b. Provide an escort for children arriving to their specific holding area.
 - c. Provide support to other citizens, as needed.

- d. Provide door signs to identify children (classroom, grade levels, etc.) in each holding area.
- 5. Mental Health Counseling Team Leader
 - a. Provide information to counselors about the status of the emergency which caused evacuation and the need for family reunification.
 - b. Assign staff to inform and counsel parent(s)/guardian(s) about their child status:
 - 1) Missing child
 - 2) Identified as a witness
 - 3) Status Unknown
 - 4) Injured child
 - 5) Death of a child
 - 6) Arrested child
- 6. Minor Medical Treatment Team Leader
 - a. Provide first aid to children at reunification centers as necessary.
 - b. If a child's medical needs are greater than what can be provided, make arrangements to have the child delivered to the appropriate health care facility.
 - c. Ensure child medications are administered, as needed.
- 7. Reunification Team Leader
 - a. Supervise family reunification process.
 - b. Ensure the room is set up with chairs for families to be reunited.
 - c. Ensure families are escorted to the mental health area, if requested.
 - d. Once reunited, have families escorted to the building exit.
- 8. Operations Team Leader
 - a. Ensure that the runners, teachers/aids, office staff, facility custodians, and emergency services have the necessary equipment and manages issues as they arise.
 - b. Supervises the tasks of the Post Event Reunification Center Staff.
 - 1) Runners
 - a) Receive briefing from Reunification Site Coordinator.
 - b) Escort parents/guardians, children and families to their destinations, as assigned.
 - 2) Teachers/Aids (if applicable)
 - a) Provide a list of evacuated children to the reunification site staff upon arrival.
 - b) Ensure special needs children and staff are assisted.
 - c) Assign tasks to teacher aides, as needed
 - d) Request help if needed.
 - e) Provide supervision to assigned children.
 - f) Follow the instructions of the Reunification Site Coordinator and/or assist in staffing the site.
 - 3) Office Staff (if applicable)

- a) Provide all attendance records for the day.
- b) Provide a list of children absent or who have left school for the day (if applicable).
- 4) Facility Custodians (at reunification site)
 - a) Using stanchion, gates or traffic cones block off all areas not used for family reunification
 - b) Put signs on exterior doors to direct parent(s)/guardian(s) to the entrance area.
 - c) Assist reunification staff in setting up reunification areas.
- 5) Law Enforcement (at reunification site)
 - a) Limit access to all external/internal areas of the reunification site.
 - b) Provide traffic control on roadways, if needed.
 - c) Provide law enforcement, as needed.
- 6) Fire
 - a) Assist in moving disabled and other special needs children as needed.
 - b) Provide traffic and access control to the building and parking area.
- 7) EMS
 - a) Assist in moving disabled and other special needs children as needed.
 - b) Assist with minor injuries.

XII. Attachments

1. Reunification Site Equipment List
2. Acronyms
3. Definitions
4. Volunteer Code of Conduct
5. Standard Reunification Method Guides (SRM)
6. Event Command Chart
7. Reunification Information Form
8. Child Accountability Roster
9. Reunification Process Quick Guide
10. Post Event Parent/Guardian Handout

Attachment 1: Reunification Site Equipment List

NO.	ITEM
	Clipboards
	Vests/Colored Team Shirts
	Name Tags
	Pens
	Staplers
	Markers
	Notepads
	Interior and Exterior Facility Layouts
	Functional Needs Assistance Plans
	Set up Instructions
	Snacks
	Water
	Child Release Forms
	Welcome Letters to Parents/Guardians
	Binders or Thumb drives with child information/authorization
	Caution Tape
	Duct Tape
	Scotch Tape
	Barricades/Stanchions
	Folding Tables
	Folding Chairs
	Activity Log Forms
	Laptops
	Extension Cords
	Power Strips
	Weather Resistant Signs (for major functional areas and alphabet, grade level, school)
	Portable radios with chargers/batteries
	Bull Horns
	Traffic Cones

Attachment 2: Acronyms

AAR After-Action Report

AFN Access and Functional Need

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CORI Criminal Offender Record Information

CPG Comprehensive Preparedness Guide

DOB Date of Birth

DOC Department Operations Center

ED Emergency Department

EOC Emergency Operations Center

EMD Emergency Management Director

EMS Emergency Medical Services

ESF Emergency Support Function

FAC Family Assistance Center

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

FIC Family Information Center

FNSS Functional Needs Support Service

FRC Family Reunification Center

GPS Global Positioning System

HICS Hospital Incident Command System

HIPAA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

ICS Incident Command System

IT Information Technology

JAS Job Action Sheet

JIT Just-In-Time (Training)

MAC Medical Alert Center

MCI Mass Casualty Incident

WV EMD West Virginia Emergency Management Division

NCMEC National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

NCDMPH National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health

NIMS National Incident Management System

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NOK Next of Kin

OA Operational Area

PIO Public Information Officer

SORI Sexual Offender Record Information (or VSOS- Validated Sex Offender Search)

SRM Standard Reunification Method

Attachment 3: Definitions

1. **Community:** For purposes of this plan a community can be defined as a location or jurisdiction in which children or citizens are located permanently or temporarily.
2. **Child Care Site (CCS):** For purposes of this plan a Child Care Site (CCS) can be defined as a location or area in which children are housed, cared for, supervised, educated, or otherwise located.
3. **Children:** For the purposes of this plan children are defined as dependents under the age of 18, although this may vary by state as some states (including WV) allow for individuals with certain disabilities to remain in school until the age of 22, as such these individuals should be included in this definition.
4. **Legal Guardian:** For the purposes of this plan a legal guardian should be defined as an adult with a legal right to the physical custody of a minor bestowed by court order or state law.
5. **Parent:** For the purposes of this plan a parent should be defined as the birth parent or adoptive parent of a minor.
6. **Reunification:** For the purposes of this plan reunification should be defined as the process of assisting displaced disaster survivors including children to reestablish contact with family and friends after a period of separation.
7. **Family Member:** For the purposes of this plan a family member should be defined as a person related to another person by blood, adoption, or marriage.
8. **Missing Children:** For the purposes of this plan, missing children should be defined as children who have become separated from their families and cannot be located.
9. **Unaccompanied Minor:** For the purposes of this plan an unaccompanied minor should be defined as children who have been separated from both parents, legal guardians, and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom is responsible for doing so.

Attachment 4: Volunteer Code of Conduct

Staff at the Post Event Reunification Center should make every effort to conduct themselves in a discrete and helpful manner, with the traumatic nature of the event and the family's high level of emotional stress in mind. All staff members, including those who are from the public and private sector, paid employees and volunteer staff, contractors, consultants, and others who may be assigned to perform work or services relating to family reunification, should adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

Protect life before property. The safety of children, their families, and staff is always the primary concern. Once personal safety is secured protect the property and other assets entrusted to you by family members and others against loss, theft, or abuse.

Take responsibility. Be accountable for your entire job requirements and organizational policies. Assist others in providing care and/or services promptly.

Protect privacy. Do not share any information (including photos of children or other participants) or provide access to the media without specific permission from your supervisor or designated Public Information Officer (PIO) and express consent from children and/or family members. The following principles are outlined in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) policies.

Treat all with respect. Maintain positive communication, both inside and outside the reunification facility. Do not criticize decisions in the presence of children or family members. Handle conflict promptly and appropriately by asking for help and offering positive solutions to problems that are identified. Refrain from engaging in loud conversations, laughter, and other social conversations in the Reunification Center.

Communicate clearly. Communicate openly, respectfully, and directly with children, family and staff. Clearly identify yourself and your position to children, family members, and staff and wear your nametag where it is clearly visible.

SRM Staging the

ASSEMBLY AREA

STUDENTS ENTER OUT OF PARENTAL VIEW

Students are transported to the Reunification Site and are then directed to the Student Assembly Area. Often this is a cafeteria or gymnasium.

It is important that students are not in view of their parents.

GREETING AREA

PARENTS ARE MET HERE

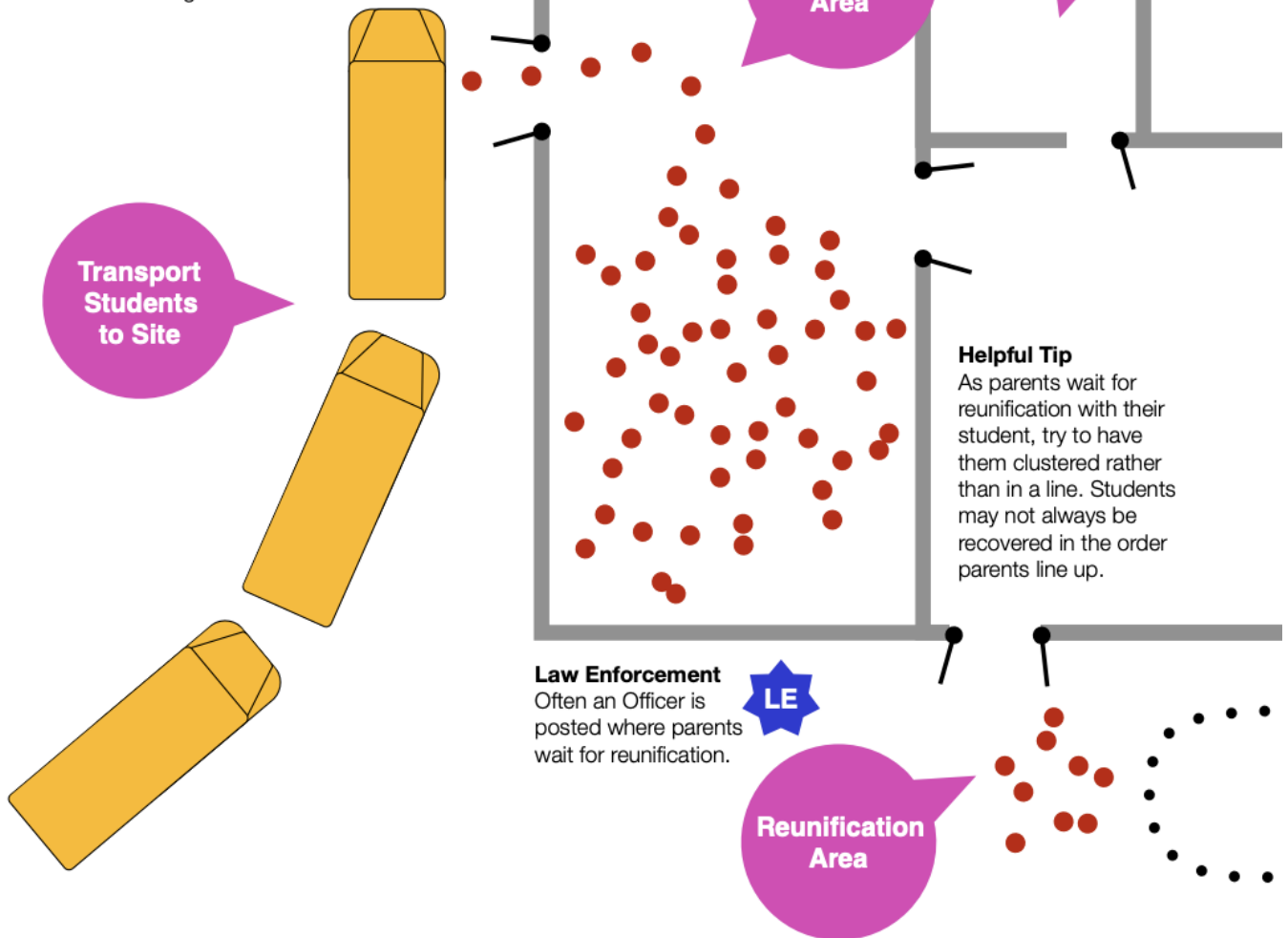
As parents arrive, signage directs them to general check-in area. Greeters begin the process by asking parents to complete the Reunification Card

Law Enforcement

Often an Officer is posted where students are disembarking.



Transport
Students
to Site



Helpful Tip

As parents wait for reunification with their student, try to have them clustered rather than in a line. Students may not always be recovered in the order parents line up.

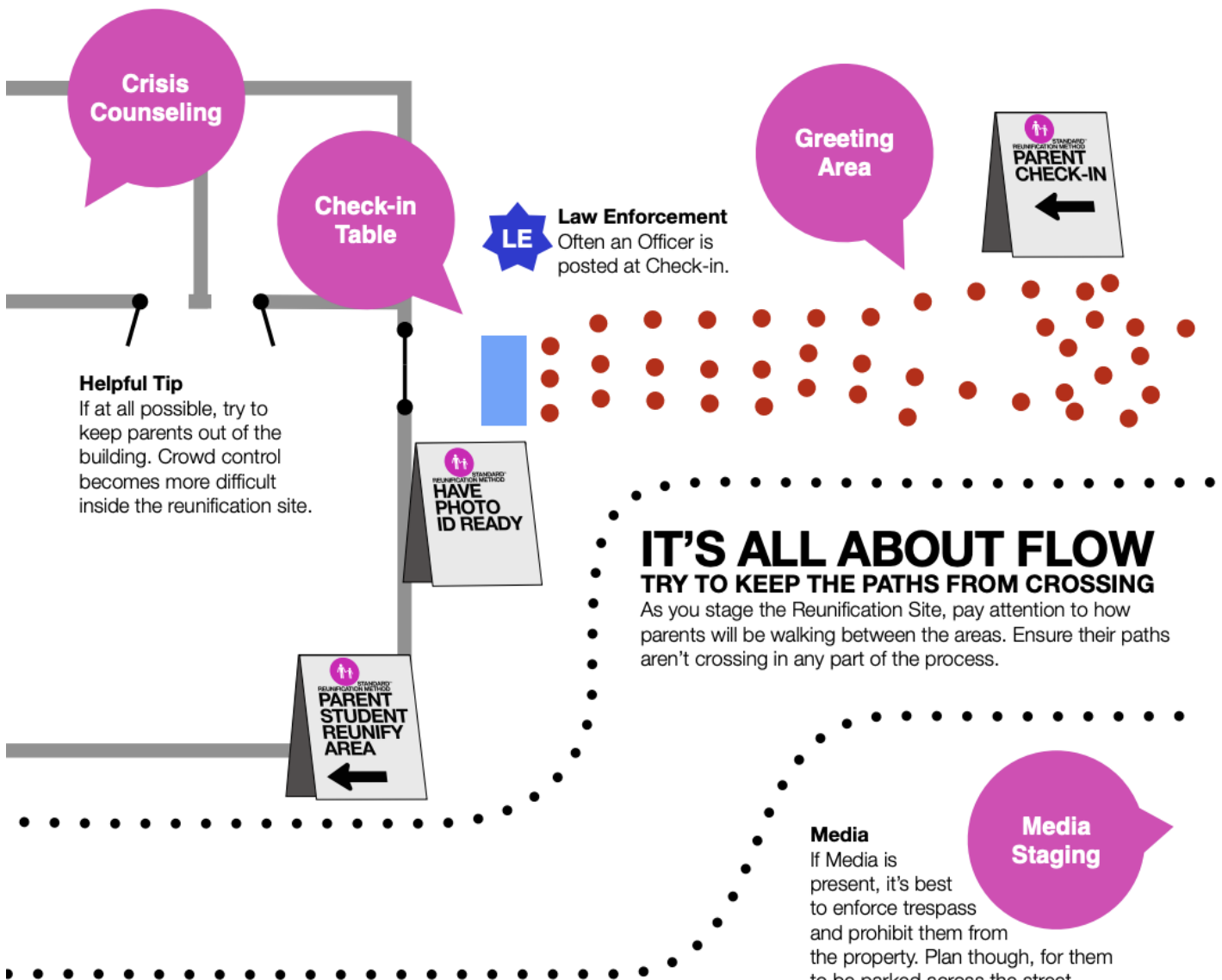
Reunification Site

CHECK-IN TABLE SET UP MULTIPLE LINES

Establish parallel check-in lines based on first initial of last name.

REUNIFICATION AREA PARENT STUDENT REUNIFICATION

As their tasks are completed, Greeters and Checkers can be reassigned as Reunifiers.



SRM The Process

STEP 1 GREETINGS

As parents arrive at the reunification site, Greeters explain the process and distribute Reunification Cards.

STEP 2 PARENTS FILL OUT CARD

Parents complete the information requested on the card, and begin to self sort into lines

STEP 3 CHECKERS VERIFY ID

Parent custody is verified. The card is torn on the perforation and the bottom is returned to the parent. The top is given to the Accountant.

Reunification Information PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY
Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.

Student Name _____
Student Grade _____ Student Cell Phone Number _____
Name of person picking up student _____
Signature _____
Phone number of person picking up student _____
Relationship to student being picked up _____
(Photo identification matches name of person picking up student? Y or N)

Parent completes:
Print Student Name Again _____ School personnel completes upon release of student
Student Grade _____
Student Birthdate _____

Reunification Information PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY
Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.

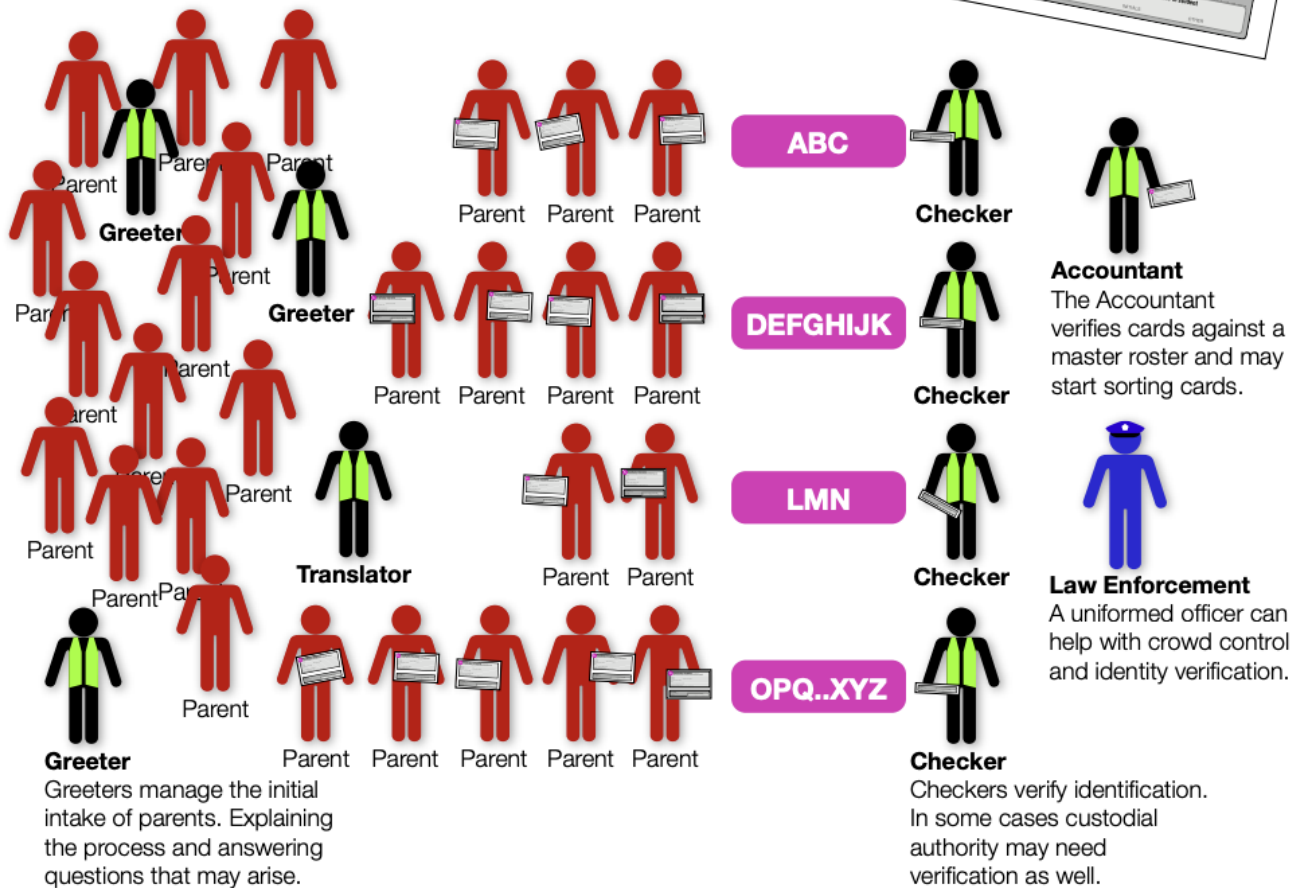
Student Name Suzie Smith
Student Grade 8th Student Cell Phone Number 720-554-1212
Name of person picking up student John Smith
Signature John Smith
Phone number of person picking up student 720-554-7123
Relationship to student being picked up Parent
(Photo identification matches name of person picking up student? Y or N)

Parent completes:
Print Student Name Again Suzie Smith School personnel completes upon release of student
Student Grade 8th
Student Birthdate July 4th 2004

Reunification Information PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY
Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.

Student Name Suzie Smith
Student Grade 8th Student Cell Phone Number 720-554-1212
Name of person picking up student John Smith
Signature John Smith
Phone number of person picking up student 720-554-7123
Relationship to student being picked up Parent
(Photo identification matches name of person picking up student? Y or N)

Parent completes:
Print Student Name Again Suzie Smith School personnel completes upon release of student
Student Grade 8th
Student Birthdate July 4th 2004



in 6 easy steps

STEP 4

REUNIFICATION AREA

At the Reunification Area, parents give the bottom of the card to a Reunifier. The Reunifier goes to the Assembly area to recover the student.

Parent completes:	Sueie Smith
Print Student Name Again	
Student Grade	8th
Student Birthdate	July 4th 2004
School personnel completes upon release of student	
Time	15:25
Initials	PH
Signature	

STEP 5

STUDENT REUNIFICATION

The Reunifier returns the student to their parents. They then note the time and initial the bottom of the card.

Parent completes:	Sueie Smith
Print Student Name Again	
Student Grade	8th
Student Birthdate	July 4th 2004
School personnel completes upon release of student	
Time	15:25
Initials	PH
Signature	

STEP 6

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Reunifier delivers the bottom of the card to the Accountant. The Accountant may start sorting the cards.

Parent completes:	Sueie Smith
Print Student Name Again	
Student Grade	8th
Student Birthdate	July 4th 2004
School personnel completes upon release of student	
Time	15:25
Initials	PH
Signature	



Principal

It may be beneficial to have the school principal in the area where students and parents are reunified.

WHAT IF?

THE STUDENT ISN'T THERE

If the student isn't in the Assembly Area, the Reunifier hands the card to a Victim Advocate/Crisis Counselor.

Parent completes:	Sueie Smith
Print Student Name Again	
Student Grade	8th
Student Birthdate	July 4th 2004
School personnel completes upon release of student	
Time	
Initials	
Signature	



Law Enforcement

A uniformed officer can help with crowd control and keep the peace.



SEPARATE

PARENT FROM THE LINE

The Victim Advocate/Crisis Counselor then separates the parent from the other parents in line and brings them to a private location.

SRM Staging the

STEP 1

ESTABLISH ONSITE INCIDENT COMMAND

The first step in staging for transport is establishing School Incident Command at the affected school. Integrating with Unified Command should be a priority.



- Priorities:** Student and staff safety and wellbeing
Student and staff whereabouts and condition
Assemble affected school command staff
Integrate with Unified Command
Joint Information Center established
- Objectives:** Safe transport of students and staff to reunification site
- Strategy:** The Standard Reunification Method
- Tactics:** Will be determined by the environment

STEP 2

CLASSROOM EVACUATION

Classrooms are individually evacuated to the Secure Assembly Area. During a Police Led Evacuation, students and staff will be asked to keep their hands visible.



If it is a Police Led Evacuation after a Lockdown, each room will be cleared by Law Enforcement personnel. This process may take up to several hours. Teacher should take attendance in the classroom, prior to evacuation.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Individuals with Disabilities Act mandates additional supports for students with special education needs in a school setting. These supports would also function to provide supervision and assistance to students with disabilities during emergency situations.



SRM Actions and

COMMUNITY ACTION PARENTS WILL BEGIN TO ARRIVE

Parents will be arriving at the impacted school. Often with a Lockdown event, adjoining schools will go into Lockout. Parents may be arriving at those schools as well.



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REUNIFICATION SITE MOBILIZE REUNIFICATION TEAM

Contacting the Superintendent and determining the Reunification Site are among the first actions taken. If the site is another school, early release may be necessary.

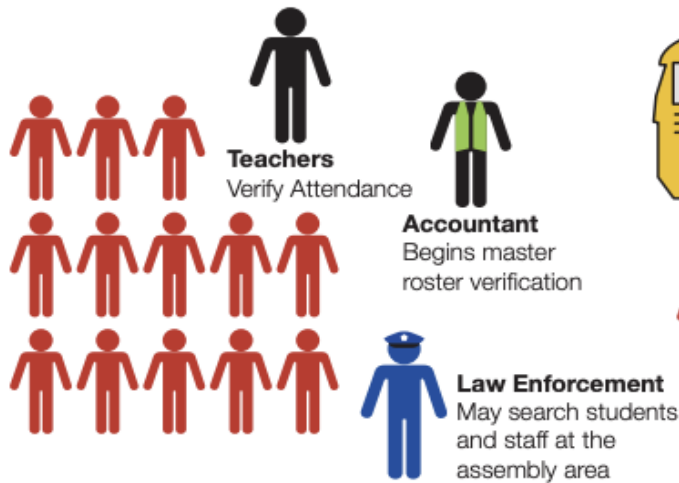


School for Transport

STEP 3

SECURE ASSEMBLY AREA

At the Secure Assembly Area it is preferable that teachers stay with their students. If some teachers are unable to be at the Secure Assembly Area, doubling up classes with "Partner" teachers is appropriate.



STEP 4

STUDENT AND STAFF TRANSPORT

Students and staff board the bus and are transported to the Reunification Site. Buses having audio video systems can be utilized for further accountability by having students face the camera and state their name.



Considerations

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT AND INVESTIGATIONS

Regardless of criminal activity, law enforcement support will be necessary at both the impacted school and the reunification site.



FIRE AND EMS CASUALTY CARE

If necessary, Fire and EMS will establish Casualty Collection, Triage and Transport areas. Many fire departments are also willing to assist in the transport and reunification process, if they are not actively responding to crisis.



Attachment 6: Event Command Chart



Attachment 7

Reunification Information

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

*Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.**Child's Name**Child's Grade**Child's Cell Phone Number**Name of Person Picking Up Child**Signature of Person Picking Up Child**Phone Number of Person Picking Up Child***YES or NO***Photo ID Matches Name of Person Picking Up Child***Parent / Guardian Completes this Section***Print Child's Name Again**Child's Grade**Child's Date of Birth***School Personnel Completes this Section***Time**Initial**Other***Reunification**

First, we want to thank you for your patience during this reunification. We share the same goal during this process: Getting you and your child back together as quickly as possible. The reason we're going through this is that an event has occurred at the school that mandates we personally reunite you with your child.

Instructions

Please complete the information on the other side of this card.

1. Prepare identification (If you don't have ID with you, please move to the side of the line, it may take a little longer to verify your identity.).
2. Select the check-in line based on either child's last name or grade.
3. After check-in, staff will split this card, and a runner will be sent to recover your child. Please step over to the Reunification Location.
4. If there has been injury or other concerns, you may be asked to meet a counselor.
5. Please don't shout at school or district staff. We'll get through this as quickly as possible

Parent / Guardian Sign Off*I have read and understood these instructions.**Signature**Print Your Name**Today's Date*

Tear off section for running to Student Assembly Area

Reunification Information <small>(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)</small> <i>Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.</i>	
Child's Name	
Child's Grade	Child's Cell Phone Number
Name of Person Picking Up Child	
Signature of Person Picking Up Child	
Phone Number of Person Picking Up Child	YES or NO Photo ID Matches Name of Person Picking Up Child

Attachment 8

Child Accountability Roster

[illegible]

Attachment 9

Reunification Process Quick Guide

Common Response Themes

Follow Chain of Command and Accountability: Know your supervisor and whom you supervise. Take responsibility for your job requirements as outlined in the assigned role. Staff and volunteers must be signed in and wearing ID badges and identifying clothing at all times on the site of the Reunification Center.

Provide for Safety First: Always be aware of the physical safety of children, staff, parents/guardians and the public and protect life before property. If in doubt, notify supervisor and Safety and/or Security Officers of potentially unsafe conditions.

Use Only Trusted Staff/Volunteer Teams: All staff and volunteers should have had CORI/SORI checks conducted in advance. No spontaneous volunteers should be permitted in the Reunification Center. Children should be always supervised by at least two adult staff/volunteers.

Protect Privacy: Do not share information (including photos of children, parents/guardians, staff, or other participants) with the press or post it on social media without prior permission from the Public Information Officer and express consent from affected individuals. Ensure that children and parents/guardians are not in line of sight of each other prior to reunification.

Attend to Behavioral Health: Take care of yourself, your co-workers and children in your custody. Be aware of staff burnout.

Priorities	Objectives
Children and staff safety and well-being	Every child has been accounted for
Children and staff whereabouts and condition	Every staff member has been accounted for
Starting the recovery process	Every child still in the organization's control is reunified with their parent or guardian

Required Form(s)

Activity Logs: Track event/actions taken and submit at shift change and upon closing of Reunification Center – DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Forms: Complete forms and submit to supervisor and Command Team as directed

Resources: Provide all resource requests to the Logistics Chief

Job Action Sheets (if applicable): Provide information for actions specific to your position

Initial Action(s)

Review of Family Reunification Plan, Policies and Procedures

Assist with Reunification Center interior set-up:

- Children's Safe Area

Review all available information from on-scene and available sources to establish situational awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent/Guardian Check-in Area (out of the line of sight of the Children's Safe Area)● Medical/Counseling Area● Accessible areas with resources for children and parents with special or medical needs● Reunification Area● Law Enforcement Area● Media Area● Overflow Waiting Area, if needed
Establish communications with Command Staff	
Attend incident briefing on the situation for Command Staff	
Designate and activate staff positions as needed	Assist with Reunification Center exterior set-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Set up signage and traffic controls● Designate parking area for parents/guardians● Establish transportation access for buses
Staff/volunteers must sign-in as they arrive and review their role	
Attend initial staff briefing	
Assist with Reunification Center facility walk-through with Operations and Logistics Chiefs, as directed	
Confirm completed Reunification Center set-up with Operations Chief	
Ongoing Action(s)	
Attend shift change briefings and collect Activity Logs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Situational updates● Collect/Distribute Forms: JAS; Activity Logs; Medical Logs.● Client Count; Expense Sheets, Inspections, etc.● Emphasize the importance of documenting everything, especially injuries and complaints● Sign in/out staff● Discuss needs or concerns for the next shift	Ensure Reunification Center operates safely and efficiently: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Child Care Staff deliver children to Safe Area● Greeters' direct parents/guardians to check in and instruct them on filling out reunification card● Checkers vet parents/guardians' identification● Escorts bring children from Safe Area to Reunification Area● Interpreters assist as needed● Medical and mental health staff assist as needed
Ensure accountability in the reunification process: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Two copies of children's roster and emergency contact list provided, one each to Parent/Guardian Check-in Area and Children's Safe Area● Children's roster to be divided in alphabet breaks at tables set up in Parent/Guardian Check-in Area for Checkers (A-B), (C-E), (F-H0, (I-L), (M-O), (P-R), (S-T), (U-Z)● Parents/guardians present ID and fill out reunification card● If parent/guardian name is on the emergency contact list● for that child, they will be moved through the reunification process	Ensure accountability in reunification process (continued): <ul style="list-style-type: none">● If information does not match child's emergency contact info, the parent/guardian will be asked to move to the "No ID" line for further checking● All reunification cards must have a Checker's initials and a check mark noting the person on that card is verified to pick up child● Escort children to Reunification Area where they will be reunified with parent/guardian● Have parent/guardian initial reunification card and exit Reunification Area with child● Initial and time stamp reunification card and then hand card back to Checkers● Indicate on roster that the child has been reunified with parent/guardian
Reunification Center Demobilization	
Attend Reunification Center closing briefing by Supervisor to receive cleaning and take down protocols	Confirm clean-up with Supervisor

Assist with the reunification of remaining children with their families	Participating in the After Action Report process, including identification of areas for improvement
Assist with demobilization and help take down and clean your operations area	Assist with review and revision of Post Event Reunification Plan

Attachment 10 Post Event Parent / Guardian Handbook

CHILD / PARENT OR GUARDIAN REUNIFICATION

Circumstances may occur at school that require parents/guardians to pick up their children in a formalized, controlled release. This process is called Reunification and may be necessary due to weather, a power outage, hazmat or if a crisis occurs at the school. The reunification model is a protocol that makes this process more predictable and less chaotic for all involved. Because reunification is not a typical end of school day event, reunification may occur at a different location than the school a child attends. If this location is another school, then those children may be subject to a controlled release as well.

NOTIFICATION

Parents/guardians may be notified in several ways. The school may use its broadcast phone message system. In some cases, children may be asked to send a text message to their parents/guardians. A reunification text message from a child may look something like this: “The school has closed, please pick me up at 3:25 at the main entrance. Bring your ID. “

PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

If a parent or guardian is notified that reunification is needed, there are some expectations that parents or guardians should be aware of. First, bring identification. That will streamline things during reunification. Second, be patient. Reunification is a process that protects both the safety of the child and provides for an accountable change of custody from the school to a recognized custodial parent or guardian.

WHAT IF A PARENT/GUARDIAN CAN'T PICK-UP THEIR CHILD?

When a parent/guardian can't immediately go to the reunification site, children will only be released to individuals previously identified as a child's emergency contact. Otherwise, the school will hold children until parents/guardians can pick up their child.

WHAT IF THE CHILD DROVE TO SCHOOL?

There may be instances where a child may not be allowed to remove a vehicle from the parking lot. In this case, parents/guardians are advised to recover the child. In some circumstances, high school children may be released on their own.

REUNIFICATION FORMS

For parents/guardians, there are a couple of steps. If you are driving to the school, greater awareness of traffic and emergency vehicles is advised. Parents/guardians should park where indicated and not abandon vehicles. Parents/guardians are asked to go to the Reunification “Check In” area and form lines based on the first letter of their child's last name. While in line, parents/guardians are asked to fill out a Reunification Information Form. This form is perforated and will be separated during the process. Some of the same information is repeated on both the top and separated bottom of the card. Parents/guardians are asked to complete all parts of the card. In the case of multiple children being reunified, a separate card for each child needs to be completed.

BRING ID TO CHECK IN

During check-in, identification and custody rights are confirmed. From the “Check In” area, parents/guardians are directed to the “Reunification” area. There, a runner will take the bottom half of the form and take it to the Child Assembly Area to recover the child or children. Parents/guardians should be aware that in some cases, they may be invited into another area for further information.

INTERVIEWS AND COUNSELING

In some cases, parents/guardians may be advised that a law enforcement investigation is underway and may be advised that interviews are necessary. In extreme cases, parents/guardians may be pulled aside for emergency or medical information.