



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Education
& Early Development**

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Dear Superintendents:

With heavy hearts, we at the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) join the rest of the nation in grieving the loss of life last week at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. We send our condolences to the school, the affected families, and the entire Parkland community as they grapple with their losses from this school shooting. It claimed the lives of 17 students and teachers.

When school-based tragedies like Parkland's occur it's critical that we not only reach out and offer support to those directly impacted, but that we also honor those lost by looking inward and ensuring we are fully prepared to protect our students. These tragic events are powerful reminders that we at the state, district, and school level must be taking all the actions necessary to ensure our students are safe from the array of potential threats present in Alaska. Parents' expectation is that we provide their children with an excellent education every day and is superseded only by their expectation that we will keep their children safe while they are at school.

Alaska's Education Challenge calls upon our state to expand and deepen its efforts to strengthen school safety and well-being. Consequently, DEED's commitment to cultivate school safety and student well-being will overlay all of our work in the coming years, and we will coordinate efforts with other educational stakeholders to transform many of the school factors that contribute to safe schools like bolstering positive school climate, increasing access to school nurses and counselors, and assisting schools with incorporating trauma engaged policies and practices. In addition to these new efforts, we must also attend to the long-standing efforts we have institutionalized to provide school safety. The most prominent of these efforts is crisis response preparedness.

DEED would like to take this opportunity to highlight some school crisis response preparedness resources and responsibilities:

DEED's School Safety and Emergency Management webpage: serves as a launching point for a variety of information and resources related to school safety

<https://education.alaska.gov/safeschools/safeandemerg>.

State and National Training Resources:

- **State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Emergency Operations.** Works in concert with FEMA to provide a variety of in person trainings on school emergency topics free of charge. Please contact Kim Stuart at kim.stuart@alaska.gov or (907)428-7020 to discuss in person training needs and options offered free of charge.
 - Assist in developing or reviewing existing EOP's
 - In person training on school emergency topics
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):** Offers a variety of distance delivered, self-paced courses on emergency management.
<https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>
 - Online Incident Command System for Schools Training
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b>
 - Active Shooter: What You Can Do
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-907>
- **National Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (K-12 schools and district trainings both live and virtual)** <https://rems.ed.gov/>
 - Developing Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) K-12 101
<https://rems.ed.gov/trainings/CourseK12EOP.aspx>
 - School EOPs In-Depth: Developing a Bereavement and Loss Annex
<https://rems.ed.gov/trainings/CourseBereavement.aspx>
 - School Behavioral Threat Assessments: An Introduction – In person training
 - The REMS TA Center offers a variety of Trainings by Request (TBR) for delivery on-site at your school or school district. For each training, they will provide—free of charge—training materials, as well as one or more expert trainers and TA Center staff support for the event hosted at your site. A complete list of in-person trainings can be found at
https://rems.ed.gov/TA_TrainingsByRequest.aspx
- **DEED's eLearning course Crisis Response Preparedness**
<https://education.alaska.gov/elearning/scrplan>

Alaska Statutory Requirements for School Safety Training:

- [AS 14.33.100](#) Required School Crisis Response Planning
- AS 14.08.111(12), AS 14.09.090 (11), AS 14.16.020 (9). These statutes articulate training schedules that establish the required minimum training frequency for crisis response training for certificated district staff.
- [AS 14.03.140](#) Emergency Drills

Emergency Operations Plan Flip Charts: These customizable quick reference guides, which complement crisis response plans, stay in the classroom and help keep your staff prepared for emergency situations. They are vinyl and very durable. DEED has vinyl holders available at no cost (while the supply lasts). Districts would work with the vendor to update the content free of charge but would be responsible for the cost of printing the individual pages that would go in the holders. If you are interested in replacing your classroom quick reference guides please contact Kami.Moore@alaska.gov at DEED.

Coming Soon:

- **Survey:** In an effort to better understand Alaska's school safety needs and garner support for districts, DEED will be conducting a school survey similar to the one DEED conducted in 2013. The survey will collect information regarding district crisis preparedness related to ability to control school access, accessing school safety hardware needs, collecting self-reported adequacy of crisis response training plans and training, and collecting information on district programs/practices/policies that promote positive school climate and training for staff on identifying staff or students with mental health issues that could pose safety risks.
- **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Guidebook and Template:** In collaboration with the State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, DEED is in the final stages of completing a EOP Guidebook and Template for school districts in Alaska. This will serve as a resource for districts as they review and update their current EOP's.

We would like to thank you for your ongoing vigilance and dedication to school safety. We understand the tremendous investment of your time and energy this vital work requires.

For more information on DEED's available crisis response resources or for technical assistance contact Todd Brocious, the School Health and Safety Education Administrator, at Todd.Brocious@alaska.gov or 465-2887.

Sincerely,



Michael Johnson
Commissioner