



Cedar Hill Independent School District

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Emergency Operations Coordinator

At a January 5, 2012 meeting Cedar Hill, Desoto, Duncanville and Lancaster ISD's agreed to create the Best Southwest School Safety & Security Consortium. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed to found the consortium and we are asking all member districts to adopt.

This MOU is designed to facilitate the interaction of districts in emergency management and emergency preparedness efforts without impacting a district's autonomy. This can be particularly valuable as statewide and regional requests for school resources continue to increase.

TEA Commissioner Robert Scott, on June 10, 2008, sent a letter to all school superintendents specifying that, "School administrators and designated Education Service Center personnel are expected to work closely with local first responders and Emergency Management Directors in their areas to ensure public school resources are made available." In addition, Chapter 418 of the Texas Government Code says that existing agreements can supersede state requests for assistance during an emergency or disaster. As such, this agreement helps ensure that local needs are given priority. It also allows CHISD to meet the requirements of Texas Education Code (TEC) §37.2121 relating to school district development of Memorandums of Understanding and equivalent documents.

This Memorandum of Understanding will allow the consortium to continue planning and coordinating emergency management efforts on behalf of the local districts, yet allow each district to decide what, if any resources or support, it is comfortable committing in an emergency. It will help ensure that school districts retain representation on key emergency management planning organizations, the Texas School Safety Center's Unified School Safety Standards Team and Dallas County SNS planning. It will ensure that local officials include school district representation in planning, training, and exercise programs.

This MOU also will support future grant applications and shared services, such as a regional communications system, planning, training and exercises, so that schools continue to meet the emergency management and safety requirements of Chapter 37 of the Education Code in a cost effective, consistent, and mutually supportive manner. The Consortium is considered a state and national best practice in school safety and emergency management for its coordination and partnerships efforts that allow school districts in the region to work together as a task force toward common goals without having to pay membership fees or service costs.