

Polk County School Safety Alliance Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2014

Present:

Polk County Emergency Management

Des Moines Public Schools

Our Lady's Little Learners Preschool

Ankeny Schools

Science Center of Iowa Preschool

Polk County Emergency Management

Agenda Items	Summary
<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	To discuss matters of school safety and security and to share best practices
<b>Mission and Vision</b>	<p>To this point the Polk County School Safety Alliance had not developed a mission or vision statement. Mission and vision statements were further developed and finalized. They are as follows:</p> <p><b>Vision:</b> To establish and maintain safe and secure learning environments throughout Polk County and Central Iowa</p> <p><b>Mission:</b> Build partnerships that promote best practices for school based emergencies</p> <p><b>Goals &amp; Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimize the impact of incidents on educational institutions and childcare centers throughout Polk County</li><li>• Provide a network for members to communicate with each other as well as with local, regional, state, and federal emergency responders</li><li>• Provide an environment for the coordination and collaboration among local educators and agencies in the development of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies</li><li>• Develop a system of informing and/or providing the membership with professional development opportunities</li><li>• Support Development of multi-year training and exercise.</li><li>• Reach out to other Counties to mentor</li></ul>
<b>Safety Summit</b>	<p>Discussion covered the expected outcome from the safety summit in June 2014. The group did not feel the summit went as expected. The alliance thought we were going to do table top scenarios with each municipality and then group discussion.</p> <p>The decision was not made at this meeting whether or not to attempt the safety summit again. If we do the focus should be on incident command with scenarios.</p>
<b>Professional Development</b>	Professional development this meeting focused on communications with media during a crisis. Des Moines Public Schools Director of Communications, Phil Roeder joined DMPD's PIO Jason Halifax to present best practices in this arena. Additionally, DMPS Communications Officer, Amanda Lewis gave the media perspective as she had previously been a news reporter for KCCI.

Key items to take away from this panel is as follows:

1. Corral the media to provide statements. Incident command will keep the media away.
2. The media will find any opportunity they can. This may mean doing to a neighboring home to get their video or information. Be specific when telling the media why they need to leave an area. They are allowed wherever the public is allowed. Assume you are always on camera.
3. Never say "I don't know" rather say "We are still assessing". It is okay to take a moment to think about what you will say and get back to them, even if it is 5 minutes to collect your thoughts, don't talk to the media blind. Have some key phrases prepared before something happens. If you are caught off guard say something like "I'm tied up right now. Can we get back to you?" Give the media time frames, like "we will give an update in 2 hours" or "I'll get back to you in 5 minutes."
4. Social media is always a challenge, and it will always be faster than us. Biggest challenge-what is real and what is not. There is always trash talk on social media so it is important to take a few minutes to verify information so the proper information is relayed to parents. Make sure to use your website, infinite campus and social media to relay the correct information.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be February 23, 2015 at the Operations Center for Des Moines Schools. The Operations Center is located at 1917 Dean Ave, Des Moines.

*Meeting minutes prepared by: Pamela Rosa, Des Moines Public Schools*