



Charter School Safety Plan

River Montessori Charter School
3880 Cypress Drive
Petaluma, CA 94954
(707) 778-6414
www.rivermontessoricharter.org

Revised February 5, 2021

A. School Information

School Name	River Montessori Charter School
District Authorizer Name	Old Adobe Unified School District
Contact Information	3880 Cypress Drive, Ste. B Petaluma, CA 94954 (707) 778-6414 www.rivermontessoricharter.org
Administrator	Kelly Griffith Mannion, M.Ed. Executive Director & Superintendent admin@rivermontessoricharter.org
Plan Dates	August, 2015 (Plan Created) January 12, 2019 (Plan Updated) February 5, 2021 (Plan Updated)

The River Montessori Charter School (“RMCS,” “River Montessori,” or “Charter School”) Charter School Safety Plan follows the State of California Standardized Emergency Management System (“SEMS”) which serves as the foundation of California’s emergency response system and the cornerstone for the response phase of emergency management. This plan also follows the Federal guidelines established by National Incident Management System (“NIMS”) which identifies concepts and principles that answer how to manage emergencies from preparedness to recovery regardless of their cause, size, location, or complexity.

Safety Committee Members

- Executive Director
- Chief Business Officer
- Lower Grade Teacher (TK through 3rd grade)
- Upper Grade Teacher (4th through 6th grade)
- RMCS Board Member
- Parent

City Contacts

Petaluma Police Department 911 ; cell: (707) 762-2727
Community Outreach Officer (707) 778-4373
RMCS is in District 15 on the District Policing Map

Petaluma Fire Department (707)778-4390
Mike Medeiros, Community Outreach Officer

B. Creating and Maintaining an Orderly and Safe Environment Conducive to Learning

Awareness and preventative action are essential in creating and maintaining a physically and emotionally safe environment. As it is not possible to cover all potentially dangerous situations, it becomes the responsibility of all staff members to make safety their primary focus.

Only when a student experiences an environment that is physically and emotionally safe can genuine learning take place.

If a situation arises where there is a question regarding student or staff safety, the action taken should reflect the safest choice possible, even if it seems overly conservative at the time.

Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Cyberbullying

In 2018 the State of California enacted a new law, at Section 234.4 of the Education Code, which requires all local educational agencies, including charter schools, to adopt, by December 31, 2019, procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. On June 18, 2018, the RMCS Board of Directors adopted a Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Policy (attached as Appendix A), which regards bullying, including cyberbullying, as a violation of School policy that is not tolerated. Through this Policy, the Charter School has enacted standards of student conduct that are intended to maintain an orderly and safe environment that is conducive to learning by clearly establishing minimum standards for student conduct, providing procedures for the prompt and anonymous reporting of bullying, and prohibiting all forms of retaliation in response to such reporting. In accordance with this Policy, students receive training regarding the negative impact of bullying on the learning environment. Staff are trained on the awareness of their legal duty to address harassment, and are given access to the CDE's training module addressing bullying at school.

C. Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting

Under California law, all teachers, instructional aides, teacher's aides, classified employees and certain other school personnel and associated individuals are "mandated reporters" of child abuse and neglect. The RMCS Employee Handbook sets forth the procedures for mandated reporters to follow consistent with legal requirements. No supervisor or administrator may impede or inhibit an individual's reporting duties or subject the mandated reporter to any sanction for making the report. RCMS provides annual training for its staff concerning proper implementation of these mandatory procedures to ensure the proper reporting of child abuse and neglect.

When Reporting Abuse is Required

A mandated reporter, who in his or her professional capacity, or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a child (under the age of 18 years) whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect must report the

suspected incident. The reporter must contact a designated agency immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone, and shall prepare and send a written report within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

Abuse or Neglect which must be Reported:

- Physical injury or death: inflicted by other than accidental means on a child by another person.
- Sexual Abuse: sexual assault or sexual exploitation of a child.
- Neglect: the negligent treatment or the maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare (both act and omission on the part of the responsible person are included).
- Willful harming or injuring or endangering a child: a situation in which any person willfully causes or permits any child to suffer, inflicts thereon, unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or having the care or custody of any child, willfully causes or permits the person or health of the child to be placed in a situation in which the child or child's health is endangered.
- Unlawful corporal punishment or injury: willfully inflicted upon a child any cruel or inhuman corporal punishment or injury resulting in a traumatic condition.

Where to Call in and Send a Written Abuse Report

Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect must be made to Sonoma County Family Services, Mandated Reporter Hotline at (707) 565-4304. Family Services professional will indicate whether another call may need to be made and to which agency. The written report must include the child's name, the child's address, present location, and, if applicable, school, grade, and class; the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the child's parents or guardians; and the name, address, telephone number, and other relevant personal information about the person or persons who might have abused or neglected the child. The report may be submitted on form SS 8572.

Immunity & Confidentiality of Reporter and Abuse Reports

Persons legally mandated to report suspected child abuse have immunity from criminal or civil liability for reporting as required or authorized by law. The identity of a mandated reporter is confidential and disclosed only among agencies receiving or investigating reports, and other designated agencies. Any violation of confidentiality is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment, fine, or both.

Penalty for Failure to Report Abuse

A mandated reporter who fails to make a required report is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail, a fine of \$1,000.00, or both.

D. Suspension & Expulsion Policy

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at the Charter School. In creating this policy, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describes the noncharter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline and involuntary disenrollment policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and Procedures are available on request at the Executive Director & Superintendent's office.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the

parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the basis for which the pupil is being involuntarily removed and their right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. If a parent/guardian/educational rights holder requests a hearing, the Charter School shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspension or expulsion as enumerated below.

River Montessori's complete suspension and expulsion policy is located within the School's Charter, starting on page 90. This policy can be located on the reference page of RMCS website at <http://www.rivermontessoricharter.org>.

Dangerous Pupil Notification

All teachers who have a student who has been suspended in the past, will be informed.

E. Safety in and Around School Grounds

RMCS desires to maintain a safe and efficient student drop-off and pick-up process to increase the safety and attractiveness of traveling to and from school on foot or bicycle. To minimize the potential for conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, RMCS has designated the drive aisle that surrounds the school campus for exclusively one-way travel. RMCS has posted signs and used pavement marking to clearly designate pick-up and drop-off areas. A diagram of these areas is included as Appendix B to this Plan. Where pedestrian walkways cross the drive aisle, these crossings are clearly marked.

Please see below excerpt. Included as part of the Family Welcome Packet and included in Community Handbook:

For arrival and dismissal, please utilize the vehicle access lane around the building so students can begin and end their school day independently and safely. This process encourages the greatest independence in the child. If you would like assistance with a departing ritual, there will be an adult at the vehicle drop-off zone to facilitate as needed. Vehicle traffic flows one way on both sides of the building. Do not turn around and drive against traffic. The speed limit around the building is 5 mph.

VEHICLE ACCESS LANE: Morning Arrival and Afternoon Dismissal

- Use one-way route to **vehicle drop-off and pick-up zone** on the south side of our building: area is designated by traffic cones and safeguarded with planters to ensure the safety of our children.
- **Morning Arrival:** Students exit vehicles **on the driver's side only** in drop-off zone's striped landing strip and are escorted to the building by an adult.

- **Afternoon dismissal:** families wait in vehicle access lane until student is escorted to vehicle in pick-up zone. Upper Elementary helpers will be on hand to facilitate the process.
- Exiting and entering vehicles is done on the driver's side only – no children may exit on the passenger's side.
- Please keep dogs away from windows of your vehicle during drop off and pick up.
- No children or adults may enter or exit on the passenger side or cross the car line.

Also reference Safe Routes to School Guide (Appendix C).

F. Disaster Procedures

Overview – What is an Emergency?

An emergency is a duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of persons or property at River Montessori Charter School caused by air pollution, fire, flood or floodwater, storm, epidemic, riot, earthquake, intruder or other causes. This may be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment and facilities of RMCS and require the combined efforts of the City of Petaluma or other political subdivisions. School facilities must be prepared to respond to an emergency or traumatic event in an organized and timely manner so that students and staff can continue to function effectively without additional trauma or the development of additional emergencies.

Purpose of Emergency Plan

To effectively handle an emergency, emergency response procedures must be established, and an Emergency Response Team must be organized before an emergency occurs. This Charter School Safety Plan is organized, and all staff members are trained, in order to effectively prepare for maximum safety, efficiency and communication in the event of an emergency.

The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all emergencies that occur within the school. We encourage the use of ICS to perform non-emergency tasks to promote familiarity with the system. All site personnel must complete training on the Charter School Safety Plan.

Students and parents must also understand that contingency preparation and procedures are necessary and are conducted for their safety and well-being. An overview of the plan will be explained and distributed to parents.

Planning, preparation, and training will help staff personnel learn the proper course of action in an emergency. This plan will provide step-by-step guidelines to help deal with emergencies that may occur. This plan cannot foresee all possible circumstances of an emergency. Staff must be prepared to evaluate all the circumstances and make sound judgments based on the situation. Staff will receive annual training in the emergency response plan.

Drills will be conducted periodically to test the effectiveness of the plan.

Emergency Response Procedures

Objectives

- To provide for action which will minimize injuries and loss of life of students and school and emergency personnel if an emergency occurs during school hours:
- To provide for maximum use of school personnel and school facilities;
- To ensure the safety and protection of our students and school personnel immediately after a disaster;
- To arrange for a calm and efficient plan for parents to retrieve their children from school, should it be necessary, following a disaster.
- To meet these objectives, in the event a disaster should occur when children are in attendance during the RMCS school day or an event or activity, RMCS staff will respond as follows:

General Expectations

- All staff and students must be prepared to respond quickly and responsibly to emergencies, disasters, and events which threaten to result in a disaster.
- For emergencies, teachers are to remain with their classroom when students are present.
- Attendance Rosters are the official records of students present on site. At any time that students are evacuated, roll will be taken to identify students who are missing.
- Your responsibility is to the students assigned to you until released by the Executive Director/designee.
- Each classroom/student assembly room will have an evacuation route posted by the doorway.
- Students and teachers are to remain in their classrooms and await instructions via intercom or 2-Way Radios.
- Teachers and other staff members who have prep periods are to report to the Executive Director or administrative designee to await assignment.
- Other staff members who do not have specific assignments are to remain at their workstations.
- All personnel are to remain in assigned areas until the situation is assessed by the administration and a course of action can be determined.

Earthquake Procedure – Teacher Responsibilities

- Give “duck, cover, and hold” instructions in event of earthquake.
- Evacuate building, according to the RMCS evacuation plan in case of fire or after an earthquake.

- Teachers will take first aid kit and duffel bag only when evacuating to designated evacuation sites.
- Hold students in assigned area [to the Ellis Treatment trail head/ Southeast Corner of RMCS parking lot], take roll, and wait for “all clear,” or further instructions from authorized school or emergency personnel.
- School administration will take Emergency Contact binder, School Safety Plan binder, Student Medication bag, Employee Sign-in roster, and support in the evacuation of students to assigned area.
- Remain with class and report anyone who is missing
- Take appropriate first aid action.
- Refrain from re-entering buildings until deemed safe by city building officials.

Earthquake Procedure – Executive Director or Designee Responsibilities

- In the event of a fire, shut off gas, electricity, and water (in that order).
- In the event of an earthquake, if gas is smelled, turn off gas; if there is an electrical problem, turn off electricity, if there are water leaks, turn off water. Once gas is turned off, do not turn back on; contact P.G.&E.
- Inspect buildings for damage.
- Report to Executive Director or Designated Emergency Personnel for further instructions.
- Set up and coordinate a first aid center.
- Assign available adults to tasks as needed.
- Decide if evacuation to a designated shelter is necessary.

Earthquake Procedure – Office Manager Responsibilities

If telephones are operable:

- Notify the police department and/or fire department.
- Monitor incoming phone calls.
- Maintain communication with employees and outside agencies.

Special Information for Parents

Telephone/Communications

- In the event of an earthquake, flood or other natural disaster, employees must keep radios tuned to local/emergency radio station for advisory information. Please do not call RMCS as all lines must be open for emergency calls.

Dismissal

- Should there be a major earthquake, children will remain under the supervision of RMCS authorities until parents or responsible adult(s) can pick them up

Student Release Procedure

- Go directly to the entrance of RMCS or evacuation area.
- Inform guide, assistant, or adult responsible for that classroom that child is being taken from the class line.
- Proceed with child back to student release area just outside school entrance to sign a Student/Emergency Release form for each child being released to an adult. Do not allow any child to be removed without a signed Student/Emergency Release form. This provides us a record of where each child is should someone arrive later looking for the child.
- Unless an employee is staying to volunteer, please leave as quickly as possible after releasing all children.
- Adults will be needed to help with first aid, dismissing students, helping with classes, monitoring traffic, securing areas, or other responsibilities as designated by the Executive Director /Executive Director Appointee. Any employee who is able to volunteer shall go directly to the RMCS Command Center where a volunteer coordinator will provide an assignment. Volunteer Guides should leave children with their classes and not sign any student release forms until the child is ready to leave the school property.

If Parent/Guardian(s) Cannot Get to RMCS

- Should a major disaster occur, it is likely that many parent/guardians will not be able to reach RMCS right away. If conditions make it necessary, RMCS will release children to adult indicated on the child's Emergency Release form. RMCS will keep a written record of each child and the adult to whom the child has been released.
- The RMCS Executive Director or Designated Emergency Personnel/Coordinator will determine the need to leave the building. In the event the building cannot be reoccupied or if a fire requires evacuations of RMCS, the students will be transferred to the nearest available safe shelter.
- If children are caught in a disaster between home and RMCS, it is recommended that they go immediately to RMCS.

Food and Water

- In the event that children would need to remain on the RMCS campus for several hours after any sort of a disaster, there will be a supply of fresh water and limited food in each classroom's school emergency/earthquake kit.

Fire Drills

A fire drill occurs whenever the fire alarm has been activated on a date specified. All students,

teachers and other employees shall quickly leave the building in an orderly manner. Teachers shall ascertain that no student remains in the building.

Designated evacuation routes shall be posted in each room. Teachers shall be prepared to select alternate exits and direct their classes to these exits in the event the designated evacuation route is blocked. Evacuation areas will be established away from fire lanes. Students are to remain with their teacher in the evacuation area. Teachers shall take their class rosters, take roll once in the evacuation area, and be prepared to identify missing students to administrators and/or designees.

A fire drill shall be held every month. Administrator will log the date, time, and type of drill in the Emergency Drill Record.

Evacuation

- In the event of fire at RMCS, RMCS will be immediately evacuated according to the floor plan set forth at the beginning of each school year. The location for RMCS student and staff evacuation is the Ellis Creek frontage area. Guides are required to maintain a current student roster at all times; checking attendance immediately after evacuation. Fire drills will be conducted at least once per year with the evacuation of the local fire department. Results are tracked and posted in school administration.

Process below is practiced in regular, monthly drills (alternating Fire/Earthquake)

- Give “duck, cover, and hold” instructions in event of earthquake.
- Evacuate the building according to the RMCS evacuation plan in case of fire or after an earthquake (maps posted in each classroom, next to Emergency 1st Aid Backpack).
- Teachers will take Emergency backpack (backpack is equipped with an updated classroom roster, parent/guardian contact, first aid kit, emergency first aid instructions, and an “All Clear” sign) when evacuating to designated evacuation sites.
- Hold students in assigned area [*the Ellis Treatment trail head/ Southeast Corner of RMCS parking lot*], take role, hold up their “All Clear” sign, and wait for “all clear,” or further instructions from authorized school or emergency personnel.
- School administration will take Emergency Contact binder, School Safety Plan binder, Student Medication bag, Employee Sign-in roster, and support in the evacuation of students to assigned area.
- Remain with class and report anyone who is missing.
- Take appropriate first aid action.
- Refrain from re-entering buildings until deemed safe by city building officials.

G. Tactical Response Procedures

Active Interior Threat

RMCS is a unique campus with an open floor plan, larger windows and open classrooms (though

several locked areas). There are multiple egress options and the campus is located next to two large open space/wetland areas. RMCS has been advised by Petaluma City Police Department that the setting and options are advantageous for the safety of those in an active interior threat situation, and that faculty, staff, and students should be directed to quickly exit the facility, and move to the local wetland area. The plan below includes the flexibility of an immediate assessment by the Executive Director/Principal, should it be determined that students moving to locked areas would be the safest course of action.

Taking Action (RUN, HIDE, FIGHT)

In the event of an Active Interior Threat, individuals should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect their own life. Typically, the best response to an active shooter situation will be for individuals to either: Run (Evacuate); Hide; or Fight (Take action against the active shooter within their ability). Local Safety Support Services (Petaluma Fire/Police Department) as well as Cal OES, FEMA and Homeland Security recommend the “RUN, HIDE, FIGHT” protocol in response to an Interior Threat situation.

Recognize signs of potential violence around and what to expect after an active interior threat takes place. Remember during an active threat to RUN. HIDE. FIGHT.

Be Informed

- Sign up for an active shooter training.
- If you see something, say something to an authority right away.
- Sign up to receive local emergency alerts and register your work and personal contact information with any work sponsored alert system.
- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.

Make a Plan

- Make a plan with your family, school, or organization, and ensure everyone knows what they would do, if confronted with an active shooter. As recommended by local law enforcement agencies, the RMCS plan is consistent with the RUN, HIDE, FIGHT listed on the following page (13) of this Safety Emergency Plan. Please also reference the California OES (Governor’s Office of Emergency Services) Active Shooter Awareness Guidance – (Appendix D).
- Look for the two nearest exits anywhere you go, and have an escape path in mind & identify places you could hide.
- Understand the plans for individuals with disabilities or other access and functional needs.

Bomb Threats

- In the case of a bomb threat at RMCS, RMCS will be immediately evacuated according to the fire evacuation plan, appropriate emergency personnel will be summoned. Students and guides will not re-enter the building until it has been deemed safe by emergency personnel.

Lockdown

- A school lockdown is an emergency protocol established to protect people inside a school facility from a dangerous or external event. The term “lockdown” can be defined

as an emergency course of action taken by an agent of authority such as school Superintendent; Executive Director, or police force, to contain and confine people in a building, controlling their movement so that a threat or problem can be located and resolved immediately with the least amount of casualties and chaos.

- Lockdown drills are conducted as scheduled by the Administration annually at the school in accordance with school procedures and observed by local law enforcement personnel.

The following are guidelines from the FEMA/Homeland Security website

During

RUN and escape, if possible.

- Getting away from the shooter or shooters is the top priority.
- Leave your belongings behind and get away.
- Help others escape, if possible, but evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Warn and prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Call 911 when you are safe, and describe shooter, location, and weapons.

HIDE, if escape is not possible.

- Get out of the shooter's view and stay very quiet.
- Silence all electronic devices and make sure they won't vibrate.
- Lock and block doors, close blinds, and turn off lights.
- Don't hide in groups- spread out along walls or hide separately to make it more difficult for the shooter.
- Try to communicate with police silently. Use text message or social media to tag your location, or put a sign in a window.
- Stay in place until law enforcement gives you the all clear.
- Your hiding place should be out of the shooter's view and provide protection if shots are fired in your direction.

FIGHT as an absolute last resort.

- Commit to your actions and act as aggressively as possible against the shooter.
- Recruit others to ambush the shooter with makeshift weapons like chairs, fire extinguishers, scissors, books, etc.
- Be prepared to cause severe or lethal injury to the shooter.
- Throw items and improvise weapons to distract and disarm the shooter.

After the Event

- Keep hands visible and empty.
- Know that law enforcement's first task is to end the incident, and they may have to pass injured along the way.
- Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns and may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation.
- Officers will shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.
- Follow law enforcement instructions and evacuate in the direction they come from, unless otherwise instructed.
- Take care of yourself first, and then you may be able to help the wounded before first responders arrive.
- If the injured are in immediate danger, help get them to safety.
- While you wait for first responder to arrive, provide first aid. Apply direct pressure to wounded areas and use tourniquets if you have been trained to do so.
- Turn wounded people onto their sides if they are unconscious and keep them warm.
- Consider seeking professional help for you and your family to cope with the long-term effects of the trauma.

Executive Director / Office Manager / Designated Emergency Personnel

1. Upon receiving a report of a threat (E.g. an armed intruder and/or active shooter inside RMCS), an announcement will be made via intercom to all school employees/personnel. The Executive Director or designee will determine the response for the event. The office will announce, "Our Green classes are starting. Please head to the Adobe classroom" (Adobe Classroom is code for open space/wetland areas). Or, "please exit to the ____ (best locked area or exterior for the threat)." This message should be given twice
2. A school staff member will call 911 immediately and advise police of the situation. The staff member will remain on the line relaying information, as it becomes available until directed otherwise by police personnel.
3. Guides should take attendance of students in their classroom, and if possible convey this information to the Executive Director or Office Manager.
4. When safe to do so, the Guides should escort their students to the nearest locked room without windows (Locking rooms: River Crew Cove, Music Room, Tech Room, Student Support Services; Executive Director's Office; Tech Room). If in a classroom with a window, blinds should be closed. Guides are NOT to open or unlock the area until released by Executive Director, Police, or designated Emergency Personnel gives the all clear.
5. *As an open floor plan environment, RMCS administration has been advised that when safe, Guides shall support students in exiting the building to Ellis Creek wetlands area and keep moving with the children
6. Students will be prone on the floor, away from door openings and interior walls and ordered to be still and quiet.
7. Guides are not responsible for locking any exterior doors.
8. Police will expect the guides to remain with the students and assist with any student needs and with any plans, including evacuation.
9. Once the building is determined to be safe, the Executive Director, police representative, or designated emergency representative will give the "all clear."

Active Exterior Threat

1. This type of lockdown occurs when an anticipated outside threat is heading toward RMCS that may potentially harm students or employees. Examples range from a person armed with a gun or knife to a police pursuit which is coming close to, or in the direction of the school. A lockdown decreases risks to RMCS students and employees.

Executive Director and Front Office Personnel:

1. RMCS's responsibility remains much the same as for a threat inside the building. There are, however, several changes and additions. Upon notification of an armed/active shooter or assailant on or near school property, RMCS shall go into immediate lockdown of all exterior doors. The RMCS Executive Director or designee will announce "Mr Green has arrived - no playing on the ____ area (location/area where external sighting exists)" This message should be given twice.
2. An office staff member will call 911 and advise dispatch of the impending threat approaching the school. 911 will not need to be called if the external lockdown was initiated by police.
3. The Executive Director and designates shall be responsible for locking all outside doors in an attempt to limit access to the school.
4. The Executive Director and designates will post SCHOOL IN LOCKDOWN signs on exterior doors.
5. Guides are to follow all lockdown rules as outlined in the interior lockdown policy.
6. Students arriving at the school will be marshalled into the school unless it is safer to go to a designated "safe place" away from the school. Depending on when lockdown is called, students may be outside at recess or lunch. The Executive Director and designates will have to monitor doors, allowing entry of students if safe to do so, watching closely for any threat.
7. Neither staff nor students will exit the school until given the stand down/all clear order by the police authority designate, Executive Director, or Executive Director's designate.

Active Threat Practice

RMCS will practice active threat drills at least 2 times per year (once per semester). These drills shall be conducted during class times, as well as at recess or lunch. A log must be kept of all emergency drill practices, noting the date and times, the circumstances, and the time take to secure the school facility.

RIVER MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL

Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Policy
Compliant with the *Safe Place to Learn Act*

It is the policy of River Montessori Charter School to create and maintain a learning environment where students and employees are treated with dignity, decency and respect. It is also the policy of River Montessori Charter School to maintain an environment that encourages and fosters appropriate conduct among all persons and respect for individual values. Accordingly, the School is committed to enforcing this Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Policy at all levels in order to create an environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on the following characteristics, whether actual or perceived: race, religious creed (including religious dress and grooming practices), color, national origin (including language use restrictions), immigration status, citizenship status, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned characteristics or any other legally protected category is unlawful and undermines the character and purpose of the School. Such discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying violates School policy and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to anyone on campus at the School or those attending School sponsored activities.

Any form of retaliation against anyone who has complained or formally reported discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying or against anyone who has participated in an investigation of such a complaint, regardless of whether the complaint relates to the complaining person or someone else, will not be tolerated and violates this policy and the law.

If the School possesses information that could indicate immigration status, citizenship status or national origin information, the School shall not use the acquired information to discriminate against any students or families or bar children from enrolling in or attending school. If parents or guardians choose not to provide information that could indicate their or their children's immigration status, citizenship status or national origin information, the School shall not use such actions as a basis to discriminate against any students or families or bar children from enrolling or attending school.

Each year, the School shall educate students about the negative impact of bullying other students based on their actual or perceived immigration status or their religious beliefs or customs. The School shall also train teachers, staff and personnel to ensure that they are aware of their legal duty to take reasonable steps to eliminate a hostile environment and respond to any incidents of harassment based on the actual or perceived characteristics noted above. Such training shall provide School personnel with the skills to do the following:

- Discuss the varying immigration experiences among members of the student body and school community;
- Discuss bullying-prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims;
- Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior;

- Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed; and
- Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior.

Definitions

Discrimination: Discrimination is adverse treatment of any person based on the protected class or category of persons to whom he/she belongs and such treatment limits students from participating or benefiting from school activities or services.

Harassment: Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct prohibited by law directed toward, or differential treatment of, a student because of his/her membership (or perceived membership) in any protected group or on any other prohibited basis. The harasser can be a student, a School official or employee, or someone who is not an employee of the School, such as a vendor or parent.

Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or degrading remarks, verbal abuse, or other hostile behavior such as insulting, teasing, mocking, name calling, degrading or ridiculing another person or group
- Racial slurs, derogatory remarks about a person's accent, or display of racially offensive symbols
- Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact, comments, questions, advances, jokes epithets or demands
- Physical assault or stalking
- Displays or electronic transmission of derogatory, demeaning or hostile materials
- Graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet

Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by the School.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a form of harassment based on sex, including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. It generally involves unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of violations:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering educational benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters
- Verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions

- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations
- Physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding or blocking movements

Intimidation: Intimidation includes adverse actions intended to fill another with fear, to overawe or cow, as through force of personality or by superior display of wealth, talent, etc., or to force another into or deter from some action by inducing fear.

Bullying: Bullying may take place in a variety of hostile acts that are carried out repeatedly over time. The acts involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. It may be physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or psychological (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, or promoting social exclusion, extortion or intimidation). Bullying is any severe or pervasive action or conduct directed toward one or more students that have the effect of one or more of the following: 1) places a reasonable student in fear of harm to that student's person or property; 2) causes a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health; 3) causes a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance; 4) causes a reasonable student to experience interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the School.

Other types of bullying:

- Sexual bullying includes many of the actions typical of bullying behavior with the added actions of exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment and sexual abuse (touching, physical contact, sexual assault).
- Bias or hate-motivated bullying is a basic bias against or hate for a person or group. Examples include taunting one's race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disabilities. The bullying behavior may also be aggressive, antagonistic, and assaultive.
- Hazing is a form of aggressive behavior that usually involves intimidation and humiliation during an initiation for a student organization or body, club, group or sports team. It may involve conduct that is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current or prospective pupil. Hazing does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- Cyberbullying involves bullying conduct that is created or transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager communicating any of the following: 1) a message, text, sound or image; 2) a post on a social network Internet Web site, including a "Burn Page," an impersonation of another student, and a false profile.

Retaliation: Retaliation is any adverse action taken against a student because he or she filed a charge of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying complaint to the School or another agency or participated in an investigation about the same (such as an internal investigation or lawsuit), including as a witness. Retaliation also includes adverse action taken against someone who is associated with the individual opposing the perceived harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying or Retaliation

Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation prohibited by this policy, or any student who has witnessed such discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation, should immediately report the circumstances in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The School will investigate any conduct that violates this policy, even in the absence of a complaint, and take remedial action where appropriate.

A student may make a complaint, written or oral, to any of the individuals listed below:

- Their teacher, school counselor or other school personnel
- The principal of the School

Complaints may be submitted to the Principal by any of the following methods:

- By phone at (707) 778-6414 x14
- By email at kmannion@rivermontessoricharter.org
- By mail at 3880 Cypress Drive, Suite B, Petaluma CA 94954

Any teacher, school counselor or other school employee that receives any complaints of misconduct, or personally observes, learns about from others, or reasonably suspects has occurred, shall report the same to the Principal, so that the School may attempt to resolve the claim internally. Any School personnel that witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation shall take immediate steps to intervene when it is safe to do so.

Investigation and Disposition of Complaints

The School will conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation that provides all parties appropriate due process and reaches reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected. The investigation, conducted by a qualified investigator(s) (who may be a School employee), will include an interview with the alleged student-victim and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). It may also include interviews with the person who made the initial report, the complainant (if not the alleged victim), the alleged wrongdoer and/or any other person who may have information regarding the incident, each of whom are encouraged to cooperate with any investigation. The investigator may also review any relevant documents.

The School will endeavor to complete its investigation within thirty (30) days of a report of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation.

Confidentiality of the complaint and investigation will be kept by the School to the extent possible, but note that the investigation will not be completely confidential. The School shall ensure confidentiality with respect to a student's or family's immigration status.

The investigator (if a third party) will report his/her findings to the Principal and/or Board of Directors. Where the investigator concludes that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Principal and/or Board of Directors will take prompt and appropriate redial action, including disciplinary action. Depending upon the circumstances, disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion. Discipline for a violation of this

policy is not progressive, so a first violation of this policy may warrant suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.

Every complaint will trigger the creation of an investigatory file. The investigatory file will consist of the initial complaint, the final investigative report, including a record of the remedial action to be taken, if any, and all documents created, used or reviewed during the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Principal shall notify the complainant of the manner in which it has resolved the matter. If, within 30 days after notification of resolution, the complainant does not agree with the resolution, the complainant may appeal the matter to the Board of Directors of the School by filing a notice of appeal stating the reasons for the appeal and specific disagreement with the School's resolution of the complaint. The Board of Directors will provide the student with a final decision of the School's resolution 5 days after the Board of Directors' next regularly scheduled board meeting. If the student does not agree with the final determination of the Board of Directors, the student may appeal to the California Department of Education using the appeal process adopted in the School's Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Parental Notification:

Each year, the School shall notify parents and guardians of their children's right to a free public education, regardless of immigration status or religious beliefs. This information shall include information related to the "Know Your Rights" immigration enforcement established by the California Attorney General. The School shall also inform students who are the victims of hate crimes of their right to report such crimes.

Reference:

Education Code § 234.1

Penal Code section 422.55

Education Code 220

Education Code 231.5

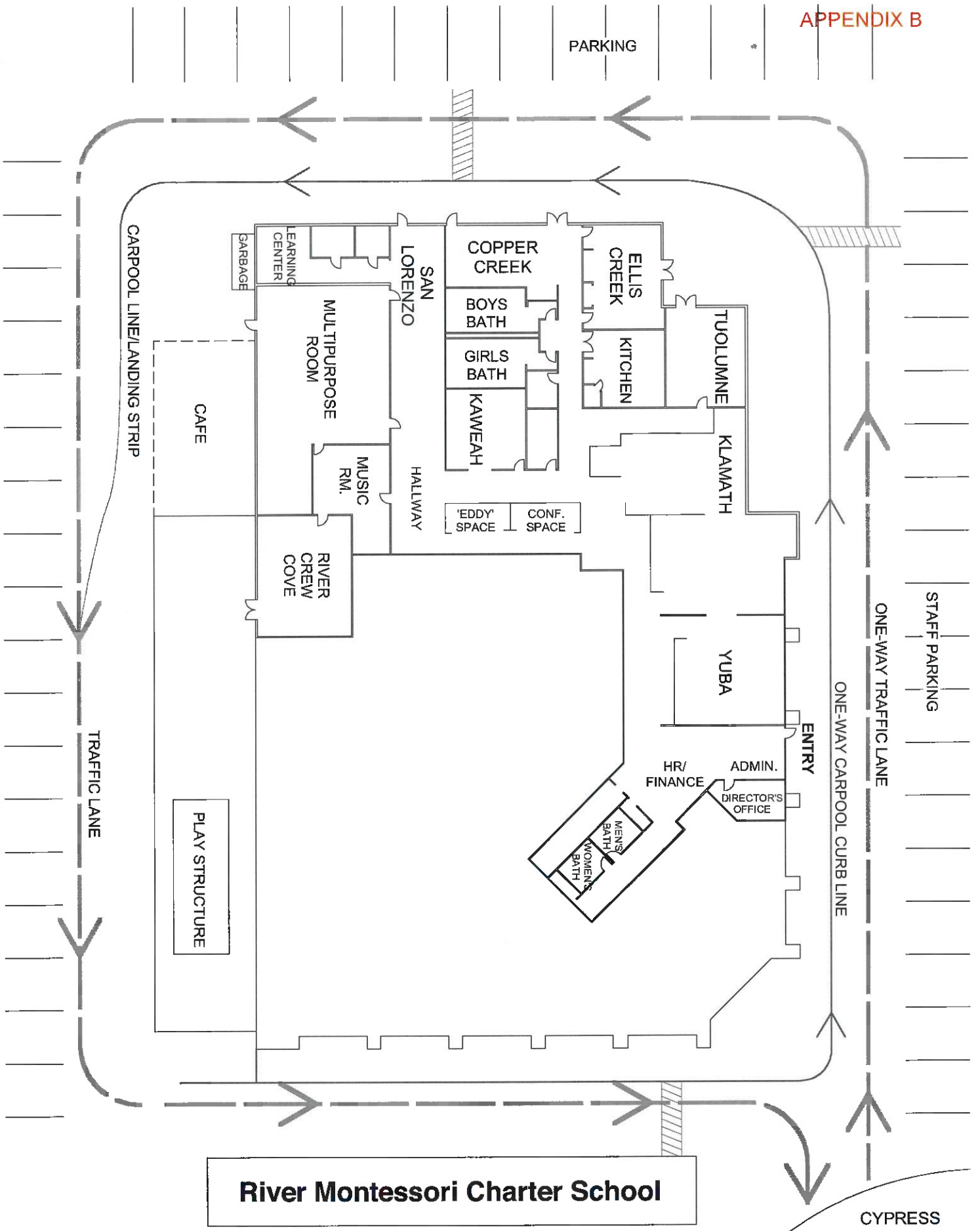
Education Code section 234.7

Education Code section 234.1

Education Code section 48985

Adopted: 06/18/2018

Amended:



River Montessori Charter School

Safe Routes to School Guide

Student Drop-off and Pick-up



Created February 2007



This guide was developed by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) with support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). This guide is maintained by the National Center for Safe Routes to School at www.saferoutesinfo.org.

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Overview

The purpose of a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is to encourage and enable more children to walk and bicycle to school safely. Communities tailor a combination of engineering, enforcement, education and encouragement strategies to address the specific needs of their schools. This includes the walk or bicycle journey to and from school as well as the drop-off and pick-up process of children at school who are transported by motor vehicle. The drop-off and pick-up process must be safe and efficient for students and parents arriving by bus or private motor vehicle, as well as those who arrive on foot and bicycle.

Some parents are reluctant to allow their children to walk or bicycle to school due to the traffic congestion and perceived traffic danger during student arrival and dismissal. This often results in more parents driving their children to school which adds to the extra congestion and safety problems at the school, creating an increasing cycle of more traffic problems and less walking. By improving the drop-off and pick-up process, traffic conditions become safer for all, including pedestrians and bicyclists. Better organized and safer traffic conditions will ease the concerns of parents, and make them more willing to allow their children to walk or bicycle.

This chapter will help readers identify problems associated with the drop off and pick up of students at school, and identify engineering, enforcement, education

and encouragement solutions to these problems. The purpose of improving the drop-off and pick-up process is to increase the safety and attractiveness of traveling to and from school on foot or by bicycle. The drop-off and pick-up process, as with all components of a SRTS program, requires coordination with local government officials, law enforcement, school officials, parents and the general public.

Improving the drop-off and pick-up process will:

- Increase safety for everyone in route to and from school, as well as on school grounds.
- Employ engineering, enforcement, education and encouragement strategies.
- Require a site-specific application of strategies; each school will have its own set of limitations and opportunities.



Casselberry, Florida.



Mike Cynecki

Orangewood Elementary School, Phoenix, Arizona.



David Parisi

Rogers Elementary School, California.

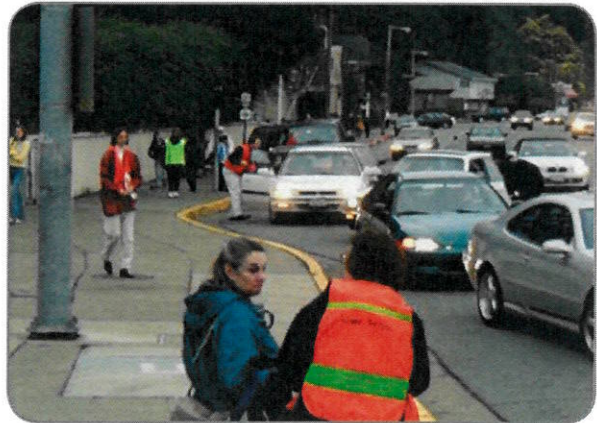
What's Wrong With This Picture?

There are many ways that a drop-off and pick-up zone can become dangerous for children. The next several images illustrate a variety of situations that are chaotic and potentially unsafe.

• what's wrong with these pictures?



David Parisi



David Parisi

This drop-off and pick-up site employs some useful strategies including striping, signs and enforcement, but it is not working. The pictures show the chaos along the curb and in the street. Note the double parking, erratic behavior and dangerous mix of pedestrians and motor vehicles.

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

Motor vehicles are parked in the school crosswalk.

Motor vehicles are driving in the wrong direction. Children are exiting motor vehicles in the middle of the street.

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

This small child is running across a busy parking lot unaccompanied.

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

The driver of this motor vehicle is making a U-turn in the school drop-off and pick-up zone.

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

Motor vehicles are parked along the NO STOPPING zone when they should not be.

• what's wrong with this picture?



David Parisi

The school utilizes orange cones to mark the drop-off and pick-up lanes and a driver still performs an illegal U-turn.

Student Drop-off and Pick-up Tools

When assessing the drop-off and pick-up process, activity on school grounds (on-site), as well as activity in the area surrounding the school (off-site), must be considered. These images depict an on-site drop-off and pick-up process that is orderly; motor vehicles are approaching single file and releasing students directly to the sidewalk in the designated drop-off zone.



David Parisi



David Parisi

But off-site, on a street near the same school, the process is chaotic. Notice the backed-up street, delaying commercial vehicles, school buses and parents wishing to drop off children. Such situations are often accompanied by unsafe driving behavior as everyone rushes to beat the morning bell or get to work on time. Developing safe routes to schools requires an orderly process for dropping off and picking up children, both on and off the school campus.



David Parisi



David Parisi

Numerous tools can be used to improve the safety and efficiency of the drop-off and pick-up process at schools including:

- Encouraging walking, bicycling and carpooling.
- Curb striping and other pavement markings.
- Signage.
- Separating motor vehicles from pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Adding a drop-off and pick-up lane.
- Assistants to help students exit and enter motor vehicles.
- Adding an off-site queuing lane.
- Temporary street closures and one-way streets.
- Temporary use of school grounds as a drop-off and pick-up zone.
- Education, including maps and frequent reminders using school announcements and newsletters.
- Monitoring and enforcement of drop-off and pick-up policies.

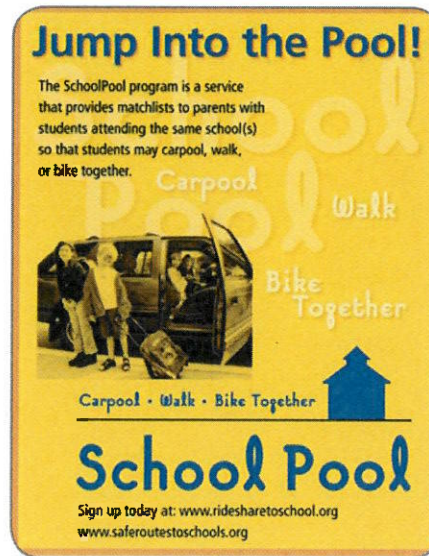
Encouraging Walking, Bicycling and Carpooling

Naturally, a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program encourages students to bicycle and walk to school. But, some students simply live too far from their school to walk or bicycle, and are not provided with bus service. For those parents who must drive their children to school, several strategies can reduce traffic congestion at the school and in the adjacent streets, including park and walk and carpool programs. A park and walk program makes use of an off-site location (such as a nearby church or park) as a parking area for parents who then walk their child to school or join a regularly scheduled walking school bus to complete their journey. The Encouragement chapter of this guide describes park and walk and walking school bus programs in detail.

Families that have no alternative to driving their children to school can also carpool to reduce traffic congestion at the school.

Communities such as Charlottesville, Virginia (www.rideshareinfo.org/schoolPool.asp), Fort Collins, Colorado (www.fcgoc.com/transportation/schoolpool.php), and Santa Cruz, California (www.commutesolutions.org/schoolpool.html), have developed “school pool” programs in which a voluntary group of parents share the responsibility of getting children to and from school safely. This can include walking, bicycling, carpooling or taking the bus, and whether done on a daily basis, occasionally or in case of an emergency, school pools help communities address child safety and reduce traffic congestion.

Many larger metropolitan areas around the nation have free programs that assist people with forming carpools. These programs are now extending their reach to include school related trips. The school pool program, for example, is a service that provides “matchlists” to parents with students attending the same school so that students may carpool, walk or bicycle together. In some cases, participating schools provide student rosters containing names, addresses and phone numbers to the agency, which then provides the computer matching. In other cases, parents sign up individually and are matched with parents at the same school. After parents receive a matchlist of other parents it is up to them to make the arrangements they prefer.



This flier from the Marin County, California, Safe Routes to School program advertises their School Pool program that promotes walking, bicycling and carpooling.

Families that have no alternative to driving their children to school can also carpool.



David Parisi

Carpoolers have preferred drop-off and pick-up lanes at St. Marks School in San Rafael, California.

The Mid-America Regional Council runs the RIDESHARE program for the greater Kansas City Region. School Pool is a service of RIDESHARE a free commuter matching services. Visit www.marc.org/rideshare/schoolpool.htm to learn more about how this program works. RIDES for the San Francisco Bay Area operate a similar program. Bay Area Commuters, Inc. is a nonprofit organization promoting commute alternatives to driving alone to school or work.

Walking school buses and bicycle trains can be loosely structured or highly organized. For example, walking buses or bicycle trains can be as simple as neighborhood families deciding to walk or bicycle together. More formal, organized walking school buses and bicycle have a coordinator who recruits volunteers and participants, creates a schedule and designs a walking route. While requiring more effort, more structured walking school buses and bicycle trains offer the opportunity to involve more children.

Tool: Encouraging Walking, Bicycling and Carpooling

What is it and how does it work?

Urge students and parents to walk and bicycle to school, and when not possible, to ride the bus or carpool.

Benefits strategy provides

- Decrease traffic at school.
- Reduce vehicle emissions.
- Increase physical activity levels.

Key factors to consider

- Develop encouragement activities to reflect specific situation at each school and within each community.

Putting It Into Practice: "25 or Less" Campaign

Morton Way Public School, Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Morton Way Public School in Brampton, Ontario, Canada, has 877 students in junior kindergarten through grade five. Approximately 50 students travel to school by school bus, and the rest of the students live within walking distance of the school. During the past four years Morton Way has sustained a successful walk to school program with between 83 and 92 percent of students walking or bicycling to school on specific days.

Despite the success of the program, the Morton Way community still felt there were too many private vehicles dropping off students. They recently implemented a new initiative to reduce the amount of motor vehicles at the school through a "25 [Cars] or Less" campaign. A "thermometer" is displayed to alert drivers how many vehicles dropped off students the day before and school PA announcements update the students of progress. There are also signs displayed around the school promoting the 25 or Less campaign.

See the Encouragement chapter for a description of other Morton Way Safe Routes to School activities.

Curb Striping and Other Pavement Markings

Curb striping or painting is used in drop-off and pick-up zones to clarify parking and other curb use rules. The color painted on curbs means:

White (or no color)

Parking allowed, unless restricted or limited by signs.

Blue

Parking for the disabled only. Drivers must have a disabled person parking placard (typically hanging on the rear view mirror) or disabled person or disabled veteran license plate.

Green

Parking allowed for a short time. The time is usually shown on a sign next to the green zone, or it may be painted on the curb. Green curb can also be used for student loading zones if accompanied by the appropriate signs.

Yellow

Stop only long enough to load or unload passengers. Drivers are usually required to stay with their vehicle.

Red

No parking. Red curb may also be used in NO STOPPING or NO STANDING zones in conjunction with the appropriate signs. A bus may stop at a red zone marked for buses. Red is also used to designate fire lanes at schools.

In some cases it may be helpful to stripe out the loading area, both for the driver and for the waiting students. Some schools stripe the path the drivers are supposed to use for drop off and pick up, and some schools use pavement arrows and pavement stencils to designate circulation patterns and where loading is to occur.



Mike Cynecki

Pavement stencil at Monroe Elementary School in Utah.



Mike Cynecki

The blue line used by the Deer Valley School District in the Phoenix, Arizona, metropolitan area designates parent drop-off circulation for school parking lots. This sign corresponds to the blue pavement markings used by the Deer Valley School District in Phoenix, Arizona.



David Parisi

The combined use of signs and striping on a residential street adjacent to school property clarifies the intended curb use. The white curb marking indicates an area in which drop-off and pick-up of passengers is permissible. Santee, California.



Mike Cynecki

This is part of an on-site drop-off and pick-up zone with highly visible red striping. The loading and unloading occurs in a specially marked area beyond the red curb. Orangewood Elementary School, Phoenix, Arizona.

Tool: Curb Striping

What is it and how does it work?

Delineate zones and intended use with paint.

Benefits strategy provides

- Low cost.
- Provides continuous explanation of zone.

Key factors to consider

- Maintain paint.
- Use standard colors.
- Educate parents and students on proper use.
- Use in conjunction with signing to clarify purpose.

Signs

Signs help define areas in drop-off and pick-up zones and explain their proper use. Signs should be standard, highly visible, properly installed and well-maintained.

Some signs can be confusing if improperly placed or poorly worded. Signs with fewer words are easier to read and understand. Standard signs should be used on school property and in the surrounding area for regulating and guiding traffic. A local traffic engineer can recommend appropriate signs and their placement. See the Engineering chapter for more information on signing.

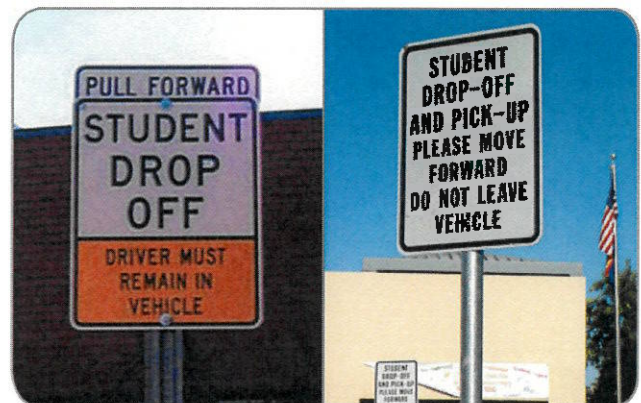
Separating Motor Vehicles From Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Separating or eliminating conflicts between students arriving on foot or bicycle from those arriving by buses and motor vehicles is highly recommended. Adequate physical space should be provided for each mode by which students arrive at school. Also, the route provided for each mode should be separate from other modes. Provision of sidewalks and bikeways that are separate from lanes dedicated to buses and lanes dedicated to motor vehicles will reduce a student's exposure to traffic. Students walking or riding to school should not have to cross busy driveways or roadways to access the campus. If they do, an adult school crossing guard or older student should be placed at the crossing to assist students safely across.



David Parisi

Nonstandard signs are not always understood by drivers. This sign is often hit by motor vehicles and leads some drivers to believe the entire street, and not just the crosswalk, is off-limits to parking.



Mike Cyneci

When worded properly and when parents are educated properly, some nonstandard signs can be quite helpful in regulating drop-off zones. Orangewood Elementary School (left) and Roadrunner Elementary School (right), Phoenix, Arizona.

Tool: Signing

What is it and how does it work?

Clearly indicates intended use of zone.

Benefits strategy provides

- Low cost.
- Provides continuous explanation of zone.

Key factors to consider

- Use standard signs.
- Install signs properly.
- Maintain signs.

It may be appropriate to provide a separate travel lane for buses, a separate lane for private motor vehicles and specific routes for pedestrians and bicyclists. Separate bus zones can be established either on the school site, or on the adjacent street, wherever sufficient room exists. Preferably, the bus zone is not immediately adjacent to the private motor vehicle area to ensure that there is no spillover from the motor vehicles into the bus area.

A separation of arrival and departure times may also be useful. Staggered bell times for groups of students help to disperse the traffic peak at schools during the relatively short drop-off and pick-up periods. Staggered release or bell times for walkers and bicyclists, and bus riders and carpoolers can help reduce pedestrian or bicyclist exposure to, and minimize conflicts with, motor vehicles. Conflicts often occur when private motor vehicles and buses arrive at the same time and in the same location. For example, buses may use a drop-off and pick-up lane at a certain time, followed by private motor vehicle use at a later time. Staggered bell times are most applicable for schools with a large student population or when two or more schools are in close proximity to one another.

To further reduce conflicts, school facilities can be arranged to eliminate or reduce the number of children walking through parking lots. Children should walk around parking lots on dedicated walkways or sidewalks. If this is not possible, clearly marked walkways through parking lots with adult or older student monitors should

be used, and speed calming treatments, such as humps or bumps, should be employed in the parking lots.

School bus loading areas should be separated from parent drop-off and pick-up areas if at all possible. Signs, pavement markings, gates or orange cones may be used to provide this separation, but some education and enforcement will also be needed.



Mike Cynecki

Phoenix, Arizona.



Mike Cynecki

Traffic cones can be used to keep parents from entering the bus loading area at Monroe Elementary School in Utah.

Tool: Separating Vehicles From Pedestrians and Bicyclists

What is it and how does it work?

Provide different school access points in space or time for various student travel modes.

Benefits strategy provides

- Provide efficient and safe flow of all modes with minimal mixing.

Key factors to consider

- Can be costly if construction is needed.
- New schools and rebuilt or modernized schools should be carefully reviewed to ensure that separation is present.



David Parisi

Mill Valley, California.

Drop-off and Pick-up Lane

A drop-off and pick-up lane is an area on a street adjacent to school grounds or directly on the school grounds that is dedicated to the loading and unloading of students by private motor vehicles.

This school created a drop-off and pick-up lane on the street adjacent to school grounds. The picture to the left shows a corral where children wait to be picked up. Motor vehicles with identification tags that correspond to an individual student line up in the yellow-lined area. When the motor vehicle progresses to the white-striped loading area, the appropriate child exits or enters the vehicle. Signs, such as the one in the picture to the right, can remind drivers to follow the established process.



David Parisi

Marin Horizon School, Mill Valley, California.

An on-site drop-off and pick-up lane can employ the same general technique as in the on-street drop-off and pick-up lane. The system illustrated in the pictures to the right uses two lanes rather than one, and the lanes are actually on school grounds. Several motor vehicles in one lane progress to the unloading zone, release the children simultaneously and move out when all the children have cleared the street. The next group of motor vehicles moves into the loading zone from the other line of queued vehicles and repeats the process. Curb striping delineates the areas, signs further explain their proper use, orange cones mark the lanes and school personnel orchestrate the entire process.

Tool: On-street and On-site Drop-off and Pick-up Lane

What is it and how does it work?

- A lane designated for drop off and pick up of students from private motor vehicles only.
- May be on school grounds or on street adjacent to school.

Benefits strategy provides

- Speeds up and provides order to the drop-off and pick-up process.

Key factors to consider

- Clearly delineate zone and define process.
- The student loading area should be at the far end of the lane to maximize vehicle storage. In some cases two storage lanes may be used.
- Unload or load three or four motor vehicles at a time.
- Do not create a process that negatively impacts students arriving on foot or bicycle, and do not encourage more parents to drive students to school.



David Parisi

Monta Vista School, Santa Barbara, California.

Assistants to Help Students In and Out of Vehicles

Providing curb-side assistants in drop-off and pick-up zones to help students exit and enter motor vehicles can provide order to the process and decrease its time.

Parents, school personnel, safety patrol or older students can serve as valets and open curb-side doors for students to enter and exit motor vehicles and remove bags or other items. This speeds up the drop-off and pick-up process by eliminating the need for the parents to get out of the vehicle and ensures students are directly accessing designated locations. These assistants should wear safety vests or belts, and the loading area should be designated by signs or paint and be located at the far end of the lane. It is best to have enough assistants to help load three or four vehicles at a time to speed up the process in a safe manner.



Richman Elementary School, Fullerton School District

Tool: Assistants to Help Students In and Out of Vehicles

What is it and how does it work?

Person opens and closes curb-side motor vehicle door for students entering and exiting vehicles. Parents stay in vehicle and leave immediately after the child exits.

Benefits strategy provides

- Speeds up drop-off and pick-up process.
- Channels students directly from motor vehicle to pedestrian zone or from pedestrian zone to motor vehicle.

Key factors to consider

- Parents, school personnel and safety patrol can all participate.
- Need to educate parents and children on the process.
- Assistants should wear safety belts or bright vests.

Off-site Queuing Lane

Another strategy to improve the safety and efficiency of the drop-off and pick-up process is the use of off-site queuing lanes.

The street in this photograph is a major collector. During arrival and departure of students, the right lane is marked no parking and the motor vehicles line up for drop off and pick up. As students are loaded or unloaded from the motor vehicles at the drop-off and pick-up zone the vehicles in the queue advance. Off-site queuing lanes, in conjunction with drop-off and pick-up lanes and assistants to help students enter and exit motor vehicles, can speed up and improve the safety of the loading and unloading process.

In some instances, striping a center turn lane on a collector street can provide a queuing area for left-turning drivers waiting to enter the school drop-off and pick-up area, without blocking other traffic using the street.



Tool: Off-site Queuing Lane

What is it and how does it work?

Orderly line of vehicles on street adjacent to school waiting to pull into the drop-off and pick-up zone.

Benefits strategy provides

- Reduces conflict with non-school traffic.
- Speeds up and provides order to the drop-off and pick-up process.

Key factors to consider

- Clearly delineate queue.
- Do not block non-school traffic with queue.
- Does the public right-of-way provide sufficient space for the vehicles, or does the needed width infringe on private property?
- Do not extend the motor vehicle queue through a student crosswalk.

Temporary Street Closures and One-way Streets

Temporary street closures during student arrival and departure times can improve the efficiency and safety of the drop off and pick up of students at school. Temporary street closures eliminate motor vehicles in areas congested with pedestrians, bicyclists and perhaps buses. Another similar technique is to designate a street as one-way during drop-off and pick-up times. Signs are essential for this method.

Both temporary street closures and temporary use of one-way streets can work well in densely developed neighborhood schools. Any proposed street closures must be approved by the appropriate local transportation agency and must be coordinated closely with neighbors. It is also important to ensure that employing either of these techniques does not create traffic problems on other streets. Remember that all of these techniques should improve the safety of the overall process, and not simply relocate the chaos.



Tool: Temporary Street Closures and One-way Streets

What is it and how does it work?

Officially close street to traffic, or create a one-way street only during drop-off and pick-up times.

Benefits strategy provides

- Decreases traffic and chaos at drop-off and pick-up times with minimal cost.

Key factors to consider

- Coordination with local government and adjacent property owners is necessary.
- School officials may have to place and remove barricades and maintain them during the street closure.
- Do not relocate traffic problems to adjacent neighborhood streets by employing this strategy.



David Parisi

These images illustrate the temporary closures of neighborhood streets adjacent to schools in Seven Trees, California, (right) and Monroe Middle School, California (left). The closures are marked by the use of movable barricades.

Temporary Use of School Grounds as a Drop-off and Pick-up Zone

A section of the school grounds, such as a play area or parking lot, can be used as a dedicated drop-off and pick-up zone only when children are arriving at, or leaving, school. Temporary drop-off and pick-up zones can be useful in older, urban schools that were built without student loading areas when most children walked to school rather than being driven to school.

Some schools have received permission from their fire department or fire marshal to use a gated fire lane that encircles the school building as a parent pick-up and drop-off zone. This use requires parents to always stay in their vehicle, and to use a circulation pattern so that students load on the building side of the vehicle. At other times this area is closed to motor vehicle traffic.

Tool: Temporary Use of School Grounds as a Drop-off and Pick-up Zone

What is it and how does it work?

Use school play area, parking lot or other area as a drop-off and pick-up zone.

Benefits strategy provides

- Provides a separate space for drop-off and pick-up by motor vehicle.

Key factors to consider

- Useful in schools in densely developed areas with space constraints.
- Education of parents and students is important.
- Need good sign and paint plan; cones may be helpful.
- To use a fire lane as a drop-off or pick-up zone, schools need to obtain approval from the fire department beforehand.

Education

Educating parents and students on proper drop-off and pick-up procedure is essential in developing a safe and efficient system.

Regular reminders of drop-off and pick-up procedure from school officials to students and parents is one way to keep parents informed. Information provided to parents should be clearly stated, provide consistent messages and be delivered regularly throughout the school year. Maps of the drop-off and pick-up area with traffic flow patterns are very helpful. It is often good to begin a new drop-off plan at the start of a new school year or after a break, and after sufficient notice has been given to parents and students about the new plan.

Some schools hold traffic safety days to provide students and parents with useful information. Drivers are reminded of traffic safety principles and school drop-off and pick-up policies and processes. At this time children can be recognized and rewarded for walking or bicycling to school. Drivers who are not following proper process can receive warnings from school personnel, parents or law enforcement officers. Giving small rewards, such as stickers or pencils, to students whose parents follow proper process may be more beneficial in correcting bad habits than punishing poorly behaved parents.

Communities with a large non-English speaking population may benefit from multi-lingual educational literature, parking lot monitors and events.



David Parisi



David Parisi

Monitoring and Enforcement of Drop-off and Pick-up Policies

Enforcement of drop-off and pick-up rules is essential in creating a safe drop-off and pick-up environment. Enforcement as it applies to the entire Safe Routes to School program is discussed in detail in the Enforcement chapter, so it will be mentioned just briefly here.

Enforcement of drop-off and pick-up policies and process can be performed by a variety of people. Schools around the country have had success utilizing law enforcement officers, school personnel or parent volunteers. When new drop-off and pick-up plans are implemented assistance may be requested from law enforcement officers to make sure traffic flows smoothly during the first few days. Implementing a new plan may also require more volunteers or monitors to regulate parent activity in the first few days.

NOTICE

YOU HAVE PARKED YOUR CAR IN A SCHOOL BUS LOADING ZONE AND PREVENTED ONE OR MORE BUSES FROM ACCESS

PLEASE USE PARKING SPACES OR PARK ON ONE OF THE SIDE STREETS

This notice is placed on a vehicle windshield to inform the driver that they have illegally parked in a drop-off and pick-up zone for buses.

Tool: Monitoring and Enforcement of Drop-off and Pick-up

What is it and how does it work?

Inform and remind the school community of drop-off and pick-up policies and process.

Benefits strategy provides

- May be the only additional activity necessary to keep drop-off and pick-up safe and efficient.

Key factors to consider

- Regular reminders and consistent application of rules are necessary.
- Reward students if their parents follow the process.
- Police assistance may be requested when implementing a new plan.

Enforcement of drop-off and pick-up rules is essential in creating a safe drop-off and pick-up environment.



Cal OES

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

ACTIVE SHOOTER AWARENESS GUIDANCE

February 2018
Cal OES Law Enforcement Division**

www.caloes.ca.gov

**** Latest Update includes Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Considerations
and new contact information for Active Shooter Program Coordinator**

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

On December 2, 2015, terrorists attacked the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. Because the center serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, initial reports indicated the attack was an assault on the disabled. Though it was later learned not to be the case; the thought of an attack on individuals with disabilities raised serious concerns. Paramount among those concerns was the general recognition that there was a lack of guidance and training regarding the access and functional needs (AFN) considerations associated with an active shooter attack. To address this important issue, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (Cal OES) Office of Access and Functional Needs (OAFN) spearheaded the development of active shooter awareness guidance.

The guidance, which is the first-of-its-kind, was created by bringing together a work group consisting of representatives from law enforcement, the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, emergency managers, the California Specialized Training Institute and other disability stakeholders.

The guidance informs the following three audiences regarding how to promote the safety and security of individuals with disabilities and persons with an AFN during an active shooter attack:

1. Workforce management

Workforce management has a primary responsibility for the safety and security of their staff. As individuals with disabilities and AFN are employed throughout the workforce, management needs to understand how best to integrate their needs into emergency planning, such as evacuation procedures and crisis communication during an active shooter attack.

2. Individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs (AFN)

The current mantra taught for personal protection during an active shooter attack is "Run, Hide, Fight". While reasonable and appropriate, each of those steps has AFN-related implications. Persons with disabilities and AFN should ensure their individual needs are integrated into their organization's emergency evacuation plan, develop a "buddy system" for assistance evacuating or concealing themselves to avoid an attacker and think creatively about how to use personal assistive devices (e.g., canes, crutches, wheelchairs) as weapons if needed during an active shooter attack.

3. Law enforcement/first responders

Law enforcement and first responders called upon to respond to an active shooter incident may encounter individuals with disabilities or persons with AFN among the survivors. These persons may not be able to hear, physically comply with or cognitively understand direct commands. Law enforcement and first responders need to be informed regarding what to expect and how to communicate effectively with individuals with disabilities and AFN during and after an active shooter event.

This updated version of the Active Shooter Guidance includes AFN considerations that will yield a safer, more resilient whole community.

PROFILE OF AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Other times, individuals at the site of an attack take action to mitigate the threat (though this is advised only as a last resort).

THE ACTIVE SHOOTER ENVIRONMENT

The active shooter environment is complex and dynamic. Individuals threatened by an active shooter(s) have to function with little to no warning in a manner that promotes safety and security for themselves and possibly others. This can be extraordinarily challenging without prior training and preparation. Active shooter environments have the potential to push individuals to their physical, emotional and mental limits and can create intense feelings such as fear, panic, disbelief, grief and anger.

The human response to danger evokes a wide array of reactions commonly understood as “Fear, Flight or Fight”. A person may be frightened to such a degree that they are frozen and unable to move, others immediately take flight in order to get away from danger or hide, and others may instinctually fight back by confronting the active shooter. It is possible for any one individual to experience all of these reactions over the course of an incident and there is no right or wrong instinct.

Sensory considerations are also relevant as individuals may be dealing with blaring fire or security alarms, flashing lights, water from sprinkler systems, the sounds of gunfire and screaming associated with an active shooter environment.

Understanding the realities of the active shooter environment before an event is important because it enables individuals to prepare themselves in advance to react decisively and thoughtfully. Doing so not only increases their chances for survival; it increases the likelihood that persons who are able to do so will be empowered to assist those around them either through a “buddy system” or less formally as needed.

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TAKING ACTION IN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

When an Active Shooter is in the vicinity, individuals should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect their own life. Typically, the best response to an active shooter situation will be for individuals to either: Run (Evacuate); Hide; or Fight (Take action against the active shooter within their ability).

1. Run (evacuate)

The absolute best, most ideal response to an active shooter situation will be to evacuate the premises and get out of harm's way or get to a safe location. While evacuation sounds like a simple or straightforward approach to ensuring personal safety, doing so under the duress and chaos of an active shooter situation can be difficult. It is important to plan ahead to increase the likelihood that people will be able to use their best judgment, assess an accessible escape path and attempt to evacuate the premises.

Everyone should understand when evacuating during an active shooter scenario, individuals need to:

- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow;
- Leave all non-lifesaving belongings behind;
- Help others escape, (if possible use "buddy system");
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be;
- Keep their hands visible;
- Follow the instructions of any law enforcement or first responders; and
- Not attempt to move wounded people.

Workplace management

Managers have the primary responsibility for ensuring their staff is prepared to evacuate places of work during emergencies. Management is responsible for:

- **Evacuation planning.** Management needs to ensure that the workplace has emergency preparedness and/or evacuation plans. Plans should define how staff will evacuate quickly, effectively and safely. Plans need to be communicated to all staff and practiced/exercised regularly (including tabletop exercises and physical drills). Management needs to ensure that staff members are familiar with evacuation/exit routes from all areas of the building (i.e. each floor of a multi-story building, including common

areas). Plans should integrate accommodations for individuals with disabilities or persons with access and functional needs. Accommodations could include assistive devices, evacuation chairs and keeping aisles clear of clutter or items that may impede evacuees from leaving the premises.

- The buddy system. Management (and/or evacuation lead personnel) should coordinate closely with staff to understand and include the assistance/accommodation that may be needed by individuals with disabilities or access and functional needs during an active shooter situation. Establishing a "buddy system" whereby disabled and non-disabled colleagues work together to ensure the safe evacuation of all workers is an integral step in the process of planning to survive an active shooter attack.
- **Situational awareness.** Management need to ensure that everyone is accounted for inside and outside of the workplace at all times. This includes visitors, teleworkers, employees working in the community, etc. Management should ensure staff members are trained to update their calendars and keep supervisors aware of time away from the workplace (paid time off, jury duty, illness, etc.). Management should work to identify accommodation needs and incorporate those needs into emergency plans.
- **Cross-training.** Management should implement cross-training as part of the organization's emergency management process to ensure as many employees as possible are familiar with and trained on evacuation procedures. This should include the evacuation lead personnel, floor wardens, the facilities team, and property management.

Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need (AFN). Individuals with a disability or an AFN have the most awareness of their specific evacuation needs. As such, it is the responsibility of the individual (assisted as appropriate by his or her representative, behavioral therapist or personal care assistant) to:

- Inform management regarding any gaps or needs for accommodations that exist in their organization's emergency preparedness or evacuation plans;
- Inform management when individual is expected to be away or out of the office for extended time to ensure the individual is accounted for during safety checks and roll calls;
- Establish a "buddy system" with coworkers. "Buddies" should educate partners concerning the respective physical, psychological and communi-

cation assistance needed to increase their safety during an active shooter attack. A back-up buddy system is also recommended;

- Have an escape route and safety plan in mind specific to their respective needs; and
- Practice escape routes and safety plan by locating exits and locking offices and conference rooms before and during drills and exercises.

Law enforcement/first responders. When law enforcement arrives on scene, their primary responsibility will be to eliminate the threat. Once the active shooter has been neutralized, they will facilitate the evacuation of survivors and treatment of the injured with first responders. During the post-shooting evacuation, law enforcement/first responders should be sure to:

- Take AFN considerations into account when entering the building. This means understanding that depending on any one individual's disability or AFN they may not understand or be able to follow commands to show their hands, to get on the ground or to move as directed. Individuals may exhibit behaviors that are counter-intuitive due to their disability or AFN, such as putting on headphones or laughing as a means of coping with the stress of the environment;
- Remember that individuals who may approach law enforcement for assistance could be unable to hear, have limited understanding of the circumstances, or require escorting;
- Ask individuals if they have a disability or AFN that they should be aware of and how they can assist them or accommodate their needs during evacuation;
- Give concrete, plain directions; and
- Use visual or gestural cues to assist individuals with disabilities and AFN during evacuation.

2. Hide

When evacuating the premises is not possible, individuals in an active shooter situation should hide for safety. Because active shooter situations typically last no longer than 10 – 15 minutes, hiding from the attacker(s) is a highly effective method for promoting individual security. Understanding that, depending on where people may be during an attack, there may or may not be many places to hide. Everyone should consider the following when thinking about potential areas for concealment:

- Hiding places should be out of the active shooter's view;
- An ideal hiding place will not trap the individual or restrict individual's options for movement; and
- The area should provide protection if shots are fired in individual's direction.

To minimize the chances of an individual's hiding place being found:

- Silence cell phones (turn off vibrate);
- Turn off any source of noise (i.e., computers, radios, televisions, assistive devices);
- Pull down shades or window coverings;
- Hide behind large or hard items (i.e., cabinets, desks); and
- Remain quiet.

To prevent an active shooter from entering an individual's hiding place:

- Lock the door;
- Turn off lights; and
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.

Workplace management. Management should integrate hiding within their active shooter training protocols and provide explanation and demonstration to staff. Training should reiterate that being able to effectively conceal oneself could prevent injury or death during an active shooter situation. Management can create "safe rooms", train staff to identify potential weapons in those areas and encourage them to think creatively regarding concealment. The concealment protocols should be included in the emergency preparedness plan.

Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need (AFN). Depending on

their specific disability or AFN, it may be difficult for some individuals to hide. For example, individuals who use wheelchairs may find it challenging or impossible to hide under a desk or in a closet. Because each individual knows what will or will not work for them, persons with a disability or an AFN (assisted as appropriate, if needed, by their representative, behavioral therapist or personal care assistant) should:

- Plan ahead by identifying potential areas to hide throughout their workplace prior to an incident occurring;
- Coordinate with management and colleagues/"buddies" ahead of time regarding the type of assistance they can provide to help with concealment;
- Use assistive devices or durable medical equipment to secure hiding spot (such as parking and locking heavy wheelchairs in front of a door);
- Practice self-soothing techniques to remain calm and collected; and
- Look for improvised weapons that can be used aggressively within individual's ability.

Law enforcement/first responders. When it is time for individuals to vacate their places of concealment, law enforcement/first responders need to provide loud, clear, plain, concrete instruction announcing it is safe for persons to make their presence known. In doing so, they should consider that:

- Some individuals with a disability or an AFN may not be able to hear or understand verbal instructions;
- Depending on their disability or AFN, some individuals may require physical assistance to exit their place of hiding or being unconcealed;
- Law enforcement/emergency medical services (EMS) should always ask individuals with a disability or an AFN if they need assistance and seek instruction before grabbing or physically moving them; and
- Law enforcement/EMS should avoid separating individuals with a disability or an AFN from their personal care assistant, service animal, durable medical equipment, or assistive device(s).

3. Fight (taking action against the active shooter)

When evacuating the premises is not possible, hiding is not an option and an individual's life is in imminent danger, the last resort should be to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter(s). Individuals choosing to take action and fight need to commit and act as aggressively as possible against the active shooter(s). This action should be decisive, without hesitation and encompass the following:

- Improvising weapons from nearby items (e.g. fire extinguisher);
- Yelling and throwing items;
- Fighting as best they can within their ability; and
- Having a "Not Today" attitude (deciding that today is not the day they are going to die).

Workplace management. When training staff on active shooter situations, it is important that management underscore the importance of thinking creatively and being committed when physically taking action against an active shooter.

Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need (AFN). Individuals with varying physical, emotional or developmental capabilities may be limited, completely or partially, in the degree to which they are able to fight an active shooter. However, individuals with a disability or AFN should consider using durable medical equipment or assistive devices as improvised weapons with which to attack an active shooter. For example, using a power chair to ram an active shooter; using a cane as a bat; or hitting an active shooter with a cast.

Law enforcement/first responders. Law enforcement and first responders entering an active shooter environment should take note to ensure they do not confuse someone taking action against an active shooter with an assailant.

When Law Enforcement Arrives

Law enforcement's role is to stop the active shooter as soon as possible, which means officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard without stopping to help injured persons.

Officers will usually arrive in teams of four and may wear regular patrol uniforms or external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets and other tactical equipment. They may be armed with rifles, shotguns and handguns. Officers will shout commands, provide non-verbal instruction and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

Individuals in an active shooter situation can assist law enforcement during their response by doing the following:

- Putting down any items in their hands (e.g., cell phone, bags, jackets);
- If possible, immediately raising their hands and spreading fingers;
- Keeping hands visible at all times;
- Avoiding quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety;
- Avoiding pointing, screaming and/or yelling; and
- Avoiding asking officers for help or directions.

To avoid causing additional fear, stress or emotional strain; it is critical for individuals with a disability or AFN and their support or buddy system partner(s) to be aware of how law enforcement will respond to an active shooter incident. Ensuring everyone understands this is a collaborative process between workplace management, individuals with a disability or an access and functional need and law enforcement.

Workplace management. In training, it is important for management to explain to staff how law enforcement will respond to an active shooter incident. As a part of the explanation, management should indicate that during a response:

- There may be loud noises such as bangs, yelling and sirens;
- There may be officers in military-style gear;
- There may be smoke that obstructs vision or irritates the eyes and throat; and
- Individuals may be pushed to the ground by law enforcement for their safety.

Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need (AFN). Individuals with a disability or an AFN need to understand the importance of:

- Remaining calm;
- Staying put until cleared by law enforcement;
- Utilizing self-soothing techniques (if needed);
- Following officers' instructions; and
- Using a "Buddy System" if helpful.

Law enforcement/first responders. The more information responders have prior to entering an active shooter situation, the better. Situational awareness can be difficult to gather, but details matter – especially as they relate to who is inside the building. Knowing ahead of time whether there are individuals with a disability or an AFN on site and what type of disability or AFN they have can help officers ensure a safe and effective response.

Communication with Law Enforcement

Workplace management. Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need and law enforcement need to communicate before, during and after an active shooter attack. As part of being proactive with their emergency preparedness plan, property management or facilities managers should communicate their emergency plans with first responders and law enforcement regularly. Law enforcement should reach out to learn about the disability and AFN-related needs within the communities they serve. Management should institute a "roll call" system into their emergency preparedness plan as a means to accounting for all staff once they have reached a safe location or assembly point.

Individuals with a disability or an access and functional need (AFN). Individuals need to know that, once they have reached a safe location, they will be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and interviewed. As such, no one should leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed them to do so.

Law enforcement and workplace management should also work together to help ensure everyone understands that, when possible, persons in an active shooter incident should communicate the following information to 911 operators:

Location of the active shooter(s);

- Number of shooters, if more than one;
- Physical description of shooter(s);
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter(s);
- Number of potential victims at the location; and
- Identify any AFN needs and locations.

Communicating Effectively during an Active Shooter Situation

When communicating with individuals with a disability or AFN during active shooter situations, it is important to always ask the person how you can best assist. Asking the individual before assisting maintains their safety, independence, and health, as they are the expert when it comes to their individual needs. Active shooter situations are rapid, complex events and becoming familiar with tips for effective communication can help ensure a safer and more effective response.

The following section outlines tips for communicating effectively with individuals with a disability or AFN. The tips are adapted and modified from the Texas Center for Disability Studies.

Blind/Low Vision

- Announce your presence, speak out, state the nature of the emergency, and then enter the area.
- Avoid shouting and speak directly to the individual.
- Offer assistance but allow the individual to explain what help is needed and avoid grabbing or attempting to guide them without first asking permission.
- When assisting, offer the individual your arm. As you walk, advise them of any obstacles (i.e. stairs, doorways, narrow passages, ramps, etc.).
- If leading more than one individual, ask them to help guide the person behind them.
- Once you have reached a safe location, provide a brief orientation of where the individual is located and ask if any further assistance is needed.

Cognitive Disabilities

Signs to look for that may indicate elevated stress levels:

- Fleeting eye contact;
- Repetitive or self-stimulating behaviors (rocking, hand-flapping; repeating words/sounds/phrases, wiggling fingers in front of the eyes, twirling/spinning, and/or jumping);
- Self-injurious behaviors (slapping, head banging, biting, hair pulling);
- Fear/panic;

- Non-responsiveness;
- Aggression;
- Running away; and
- Covering ears or screeching.

To enhance communication during times of elevated stress:

- Make eye contact;
- Be patient;
- Speak slowly, use plain and concrete language;
- Give one-step direction – wait two seconds and repeat;
- Be mindful of your body language (non-verbal cues);
- Do not touch; and
- Model the expected response (hands up, fingers apart, etc.).

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- If possible, flick the lights when entering an area or room to get the individual's attention.
- Establish eye contact with the individual, not with the interpreter or "buddy", if one is present.
- Use facial expressions and have gestures as visual cues.
- Keep your face visible at all times and keep instructions in the present tense using basic vocabulary.
- Once individual is in a safe location, offer pencil and paper for written communication if no interpreter or "buddy" is present.

Mental/Behavioral Health

- Speak slowly and in a calm tone.
- Keep communication straightforward, clear and brief.
- If the person exhibits confusion, avoid giving multiple commands. Instead, ask or state one command at a time.
- Try to avoid interrupting a person who may be disoriented; just let them know that you have to move quickly.
- Have a forward leaning body position to show interest and concern.

Service Animals

- Evacuate the owner and the animal together. Avoid separating them whenever possible.
- If an animal is wearing a harness or vest, it is on duty. If you are asked to take the animal while assisting the individual, hold the leash and not the harness (if applicable).
- Service animals are not registered and there is no proof that the animal is a service animal. If the person tells you it is a service animal, treat it as such. However, if the animal is out of control or presents a threat to the individual or others, remove it from the scene.
- The animal may not be specially trained as a service animal. People with psychiatric and emotional disabilities may have a companion animal. Be understanding and treat the animal as a service animal.

Physical Disabilities

- Ask the individual how you can help before beginning any assistance.
- Ask the individual if he/she is able to stand or walk with or without the use of a mobility device.
- If the conversation will take more than a few minutes, sit or kneel to speak to the person at eye level.

Pregnant Women

- If the pregnant woman is otherwise healthy, she can be included in evacuation plans.
- Be as calming as possible as expectant mothers may become anxious during emergencies.
- Provide reassurance of assistance and meeting identified needs.
- Provide fluids once she has arrived to a safe location.

FUTURE ACTIVE SHOOTER AWARENESS TRAINING



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