



# Emergencies Contingency Planning

## PURPOSE

Emergency contingency planning is the process of preparing structured, proactive responses to potential school-based crises to ensure student safety, staff coordination, and instructional continuity. This includes planning for events such as active shooter drills, elopement, severe challenging behavior, transportation incidents, and unexpected school closures or remote learning transitions.

The goal is not to ensure staff and students understand roles, procedures, and communication pathways before an emergency occurs.

## CORE TYPES OF CONTINGENCIES

### 1. Safety & Security Events (e.g., Active Threat Drills)

Focus on ensuring staff understand building-wide emergency procedures, communication systems, and lockdown/evacuation roles.

Key Priorities:

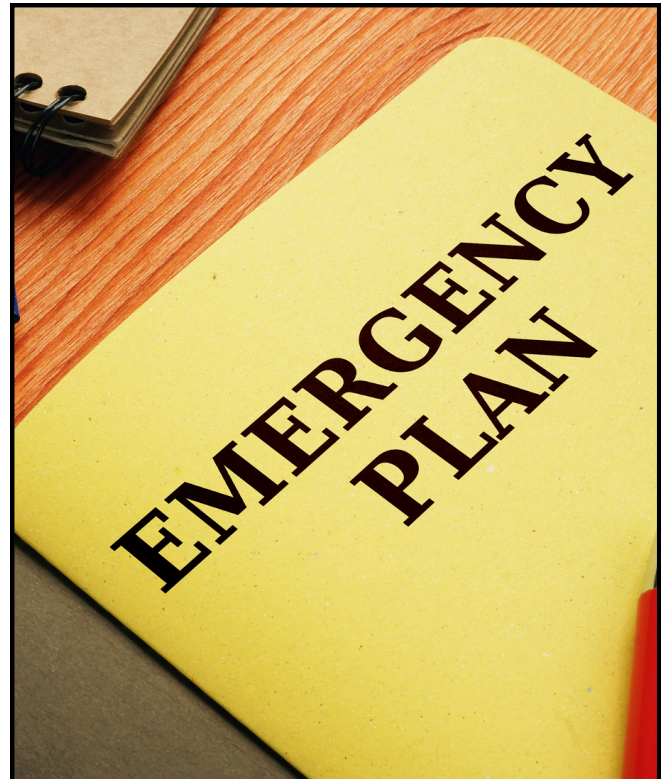
- Clear understanding of alert levels and signals
- Defined staff roles during drills and real events
- Communication protocols (who contacts whom and when)
- Student accountability procedures

### 2. Elopement / Missing Student Response

Planning for rapid response when a student leaves a designated area without permission.

Key Priorities:

- Prevention strategies (supervision, environmental awareness)
- Immediate notification procedures
- Search roles and coverage zones
- Documentation and incident reporting



### 3. Severe Challenging Behavior / SIB (Self-Injurious Behavior)

Prepared response plans for students who may escalate to unsafe behavior requiring immediate intervention.

Key Priorities:

- Recognizing early warning signs
- De-escalation strategies
- Accessing trained support staff
- Maintaining safety of student and peers
- Data collection after incidents

4. Transportation / School Bus Incidents  
Planning for behavioral or safety concerns occurring during arrival/dismissal or on buses.

Key Priorities:

- Communication between transportation and school staff
- Defined response roles for bus and school teams
- Student-specific transportation plans when needed
- Reinforcement of expectations and routines

5. Remote Learning / School Closure  
Transitions

Ensuring continuity of instruction and support during unexpected closures or transitions to virtual learning.

Key Priorities:

- Access to instructional materials and technology
- Clear communication with families
- Adapted expectations for student participation
- Continuity of behavior and support plans

## KEY COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE PLANNING

### **Clear Roles & Responsibilities**

Every staff member should know exactly what they are responsible for during an emergency.

### **Communication Systems**

Establish reliable methods for rapid communication (radios, alerts, phone trees, messaging systems).

### **Antecedent-Based Approach**

Use proactive supports to reduce the likelihood of escalation whenever possible.

### **Consistency Across Settings**

Ensure procedures are aligned across classrooms, common areas, and transportation settings.

### **Documentation & Debriefing**

All incidents should be documented and reviewed to improve future responses.

## STAFF TRAINING PRIORITIES

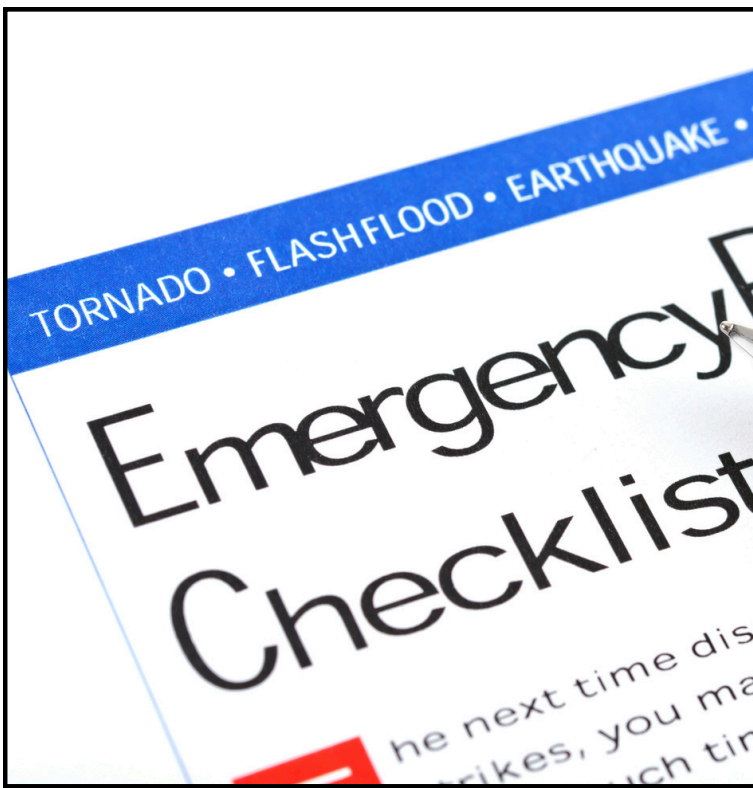
Staff should be able to:

- Identify emergency procedures for their role
- Respond quickly and calmly under direction
- Implement de-escalation and safety strategies
- Follow communication protocols without delay
- Maintain student supervision and accountability



## MISSOURI-DESE

Schools can access free emergency planning templates and safety resources through the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) School Safety & Emergency Planning webpage. These templates help districts develop and organize Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs), clarify staff roles, strengthen communication procedures, and guide schools in planning for a variety of emergency situations including active threats, evacuations, behavioral crises, and continuity of operations. Schools can use these resources to support consistent, proactive emergency preparedness across settings.



# QUICK PLANNING CHECKLIST

## Before an Emergency

- Define staff roles and responsibilities
- Review communication procedures
- Conduct drills and practice scenarios
- Identify high-risk students and supports
- Ensure access to emergency materials

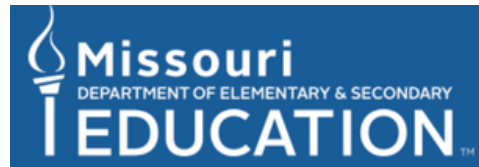
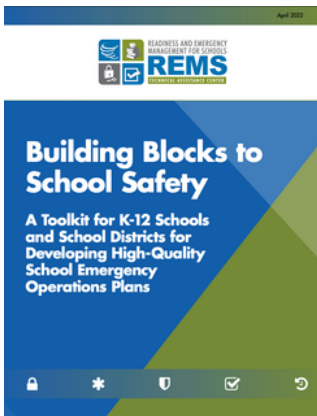
## During an Emergency

- Follow assigned roles
- Maintain communication chain
- Ensure student safety and supervision
- Implement planned procedures

## After an Emergency

- Complete documentation
- Debrief with staff
- Review what worked and what didn't
- Update contingency plans as needed

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



## REMINDERS

Effective emergency contingency planning ensures that staff are prepared, coordinated, and confident in their roles so that student safety and stability are maintained during unexpected situations.

- [Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education \(DESE\): School Safety & Emergency Planning](#)
- [Missouri DESE Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Missouri State Emergency Management Agency \(SEMA\)](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Emergency Planning Resources](#)

These resources support school emergency planning, crisis response procedures, safety drills, behavioral crisis response, and continuity planning for Missouri schools.



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