



# Situational Awareness and Emergency Preparedness Training for Illinois K-12 Educators

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## Introduction

An estranged husband in San Bernardino shot and killed his wife, a teacher at her school, wounding two students standing behind her before taking his own life. One of those students later died (Hamasaki, & Simon, 2017). In 2013, tornadoes unexpectedly struck Moore, Oklahoma when classes were in session. Children, staff and faculty of two elementary schools were injured or killed as a result (Levis, 2013; Gutierrez, 2014). Educational institutions are not immune to the effects of natural, human-induced and technological disasters. The first line of defense in schools for mitigating actions before, during and after disasters are K-12 personnel.

## Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to determine the receptiveness of administrations, staffs, and faculties of the schools at Community Consolidated School District 15 and Township High School District 211 to emergency preparedness training. Additionally, it is to determine the scope and sequence of a disaster and workplace violence curriculum for northeastern Illinois K-12 school personnel.

## Literature Review

In the United States and overseas, school emergency preparedness has attracted special attention. However, little is known about how and to what extent schools in the United States are prepared for emergencies and disasters (Kano et al., 2007).

### School Role in Disaster Response

Formal emergency responders are often unable to reach disaster scenes immediately and schools are not traditional emergency response organizations. However, they will often be the first responders to events occurring on campus (Kano et al., 2007).

### Disaster Plans

Written disaster plans are important. However if these plans are not tied to training programs and necessary resources, they may only give the illusion of preparedness (Auf der Heide, 1989).

### Illinois School Disaster Planning and Training Requirements

The purpose of Illinois' School Safety Drill Act (§105 ILCS 128, 2005) is to institute minimum requirements and standards for schools to follow when conducting school safety drills.

## Research Design

This will be an exploratory study by means of a mixed-method design using data source triangulation. Secondary data, interviews and observations will be utilized as the research methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### Secondary Data

The researcher will conduct a thorough literature review of emergency management scholarly research resources.

### Interviews

Surveys and focus groups will be the interview instruments (Fowler, 2009). This will be conducted with the administration, staff and faculties of K-12 institutions as the target audience.

### Observations

Consideration of anecdotal information received from observations and discussions between the researcher and current and former school personnel. This researcher was the training coordinator and instructor for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training (Ready.gov, 2017) conducted in Palatine, Illinois by the Palatine Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

## Alignment

There is an alignment of the problem statement, research questions, and hypothesis to support the study's purpose of ascertaining the receptiveness of school personnel to emergency preparedness training, and to determine the scope and sequence of a disaster and workplace violence curriculum for K-12 school personnel. Minimizing the effects of hazardous events and decreasing the need for response is the goal of mitigation in schools ("Disaster Planning for Schools," 2008). "School systems and their students remain unprepared to deal with disasters, whether natural or man-made" (Altevogt, Reeve & Wizemann, 2014).

## References

### See Handout:

- Scholarly Articles
- Web-based Articles
- Federal Government Documents and Manuals (Various Types)
- State Government Documents and Manuals (Various Types)
- Research Reference Books



## NEIGHBORS COMFORT BOY IN TORNADO AFTERMATH

### First-grader survived destruction of his school



CHILDREN, KILLED BY MASSIVE TORNADO IN OKLA. CITY AREA



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