June, 2015

Dear School Safety Stakeholder,

The Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education (LADOE) is pleased to offer local school districts assistance in writing and implementing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans (High-Quality EOPs). This opportunity is provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) through the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance (REMS TA) Center – Grants to States for School Emergency Management Planning (SEMP).

Grant Purpose

The purpose of the grant is to build capacity at the district and local levels for all-hazards emergency operations planning. The initiative helps ensure school and campus safety. It also helps ensure appropriate response from on-scene staff in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Background

The tragic events of 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, serve as a grim reminder of the need for schools to have an effective emergency response plan. To ensure every student, teacher and school employee is in a safe and secure facility and prepared to respond in the event of an emergency or disaster incident, Act 313 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session [RS 17:416.16] mandates that all elementary and secondary public schools prepare, maintain and exercise a crisis management and response plan.

Today, these are known as High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (High-Quality EOPs).

Program Description

During the 18-month grant cycle, this program will include:

- Data collection initiatives
- Stakeholder outreach
- TableTop exercises
- Robust plan-development training
- Creation of plan-development guidance tools
- Plan review and feedback opportunities

It is our intention that all public, parochial and charter schools throughout Louisiana have access to needed plan-development guidance so that we have High-Quality EOPs in place, ensuring the safety of our school campuses, students and staffs should an emergency or disaster occur.
Plan Development ToolKit

Several tools, sample plans and checklists have been developed across various local, State and Federal agencies, departments and stakeholder organizations to help local school districts improve existing plans and create new plans where needed.

Louisiana’s School and Campus Safety Study Group – in partnership with the GOHSEP and the LADOE – has consolidated key existing materials into this easy-to-use Louisiana ToolKit for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (High-Quality EOP ToolKit).

This ToolKit includes how-to job aids and samples to assist school-safety plan development, maintenance and exercise of school EOPs.


- U.S. Department of Education (DOE)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHH)
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Training + Exercise

In addition to the ToolKit, we are coordinating a robust outreach and training initiative to enhance district- and local-level plan development capacity. Look for details in the ToolKit and announcements to come.
Plan Review

The grant program ends with a plan review component that provides feedback on district-level plans developed through this initiative. You will learn more about the plan review process in today’s workshop.

SEMP Team

To coordinate efforts and to provide assistance, we have created a Louisiana SEMP Team. Feel free to contact any of our team members at any time for assistance.

Sandy Davis  
Executive Officer  
Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness  
Sandy.Davis@la.gov

April Mathes  
Preparedness Officer  
Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness  
April.Mathes@la.gov

Dr. Gary Jones  
Assistant Superintendent  
Louisiana Department of Education  
Gary.Jones@la.gov

Derek Breaux  
Preparedness Officer  
Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness  
Derek.Breaux@la.gov

We look forward to working with you to create High-Quality EOPs, ensuring the safety of our students, schools and staffs.

Best Wishes,

Kevin Davis  
Director  
Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

John White  
Secretary  
Louisiana Department of Education

The plan development guidance tool and the ToolKit are intended to be suggestive, not mandatory. Together, they are one tool among many that may be used in evaluating the safety of a school campus and its students, employees and visitors. Use of this Guide is not intended to impute liability to the developers, the State of Louisiana – its departments, agencies, boards, commissions or any officer, employee, agency, representative, contractor or volunteer thereof.