

# Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for School Crisis Response Mutual Aid

Date \_\_\_\_\_

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) addresses agreements between the \_\_\_\_\_ Parish Office of Education, \_\_\_\_\_ Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, \_\_\_\_\_ Parish Mental Health Services, and those school districts within \_\_\_\_\_ Parish who agree to participate.

## **Purpose**

Disasters of a large scale that occur within school districts may overwhelm the resources of that district. While this is an infrequent occurrence, it is best to be prepared for the possibility of such an occurrence by entering into mutual aid agreements with other school districts, Parish emergency services and Parish mental health services. Such mutual aid agreements – also called MAAs – help institutions offer services to each other following major disasters. Past experience has shown that when a large-scale disaster occurs, it is difficult to coordinate services without some planning.

## **Background**

The origins of this MOU can be found in school safety legislation, Louisiana Revised Statute 17:416.16. According to this legislation, all school districts are required to have a school crisis response management and response plan in place. Today those plans are also called *High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans* (High-Quality EOPs). Part of the emergency response plan includes disaster response procedures. Typically, it is expected that individual schools and/or school districts will manage their own crises using their school crisis response plan or emergency operations plan (EOP). This Memorandum addresses those occurrences, infrequent though they may be, which tax the resources of the school district to the point where outside help is required.

## **Agreement**

1. Each individual school district has the responsibility of responding to its own crises. Additionally, it is the district administration's responsibility to determine when the resources of the district are no longer adequate to deal with a situation. It is the district administration's responsibility to ask for assistance when it is deemed necessary. Mutual aid support is not provided without a request from a district-level administrator.
2. If school disaster mutual aid response assistance is needed, a district-level administrator or designee will contact the neighboring Parish administrator or designee and notify the Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP).
3. The issue of payment is raised because it is possible that an emergency situation can turn into a disaster, which will require Federal assistance, at which point there may be reimbursement for costs for disaster response.
4. Following a request for mutual aid assistance, the district-level administrator will contact appropriate resources for the first response. The choice of which resources or school districts to contact may be based on geographic considerations (i.e., proximity to requesting district), but can also be based on other considerations (i.e., choosing a district that has not already been asked to provide mutual aid support).
5. School districts offering to provide mutual aid to a requesting district will provide only credentialed personnel. Responding Mental Health Services staff will be either licensed

clinicians or registered interns (psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed clinical social worker or professional counselor, or marriage or family counselor). Generally speaking, only staff that has been trained in crisis response will be deployed.

6. Responding districts will provide assistance for up to three (3) days. At the end of the three (3) days, further agreements between individual districts, Mental Health Services, Office of Education and the Parish OHSEP will be necessary in order to provide further assistance.
7. Unless otherwise specified, shifts of work shall be eight (8) hours long for the three (3)-day period.
8. The district requesting the help shall provide supplies for classroom activities, such as art supplies and writing materials, unless otherwise specified in the request for assistance.
9. Participating districts agree to meet annually to ensure appropriate response procedures are still viable.

The signatures below indicate an agreement to abide by this Memorandum of Understanding for crisis response to school districts, pledges cooperation and problem solving and agrees to respond appropriately for the good of the district and the parish.

**Term**

This Memorandum will be in force on the date first signed below, and will be self-renewing. This Memorandum will be reviewed annually. Districts that no longer wish to participate in this Memorandum of Understanding shall notify, in writing, within 30 days, the following departments: Superintendent, Parish Schools Director, Parish Mental Health Services Director and the OHSEP Director.

Duly adopted at a meeting held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School District Name)

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parish School Superintendent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parish Mental Health Services Director)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OHSEP Director)