



## STUDENT VOICE | STUDENT CHOICE

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# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Crisis Management Policy for Cross River Charter School is to act as a guide for the Executive Director of School, school employees, students, Board members, and community members as to how to address a wide range of potential crisis situations in the school. The Board of Directors directs the Cross River Charter School administration to draft crisis management plans to coordinate protective actions prior to, during, and after any type of emergency or potential crisis situation in the school.

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### *A. Policy and Plans*

The school's Crisis Management plans will be created in consultation with local community response agencies and other appropriate individuals and groups likely to be involved in assisting with a school emergency. The plan will be tailored to meet the school building's specific situation and needs.

The Executive Director and leadership team of Cross River Charter School shall present tailored Crisis Management plans to the Board of Directors for review and approval. These plans will include general crisis procedures and crisis-specific procedures. Upon approval by the school board, such crisis management plans shall be an addendum to this Crisis Management Policy. This Policy and the plans will be maintained and updated annually.

### *B. Elements of the Crisis Management Policy*

1. **General Crisis Procedures.** The Crisis Management policy includes general crisis procedures for securing the building, classroom evacuation, building evacuation, campus evacuation, and sheltering. It designates the individual(s) who will determine when these actions will be taken.
  - i. *Lock-Down Procedures.* Lock-down procedures will be used in situations that may result in harm to persons inside the school building, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespassing, disturbance, or at the discretion of the Executive Director and leadership team of School or designee. The Executive Director of School, or designee, will announce the lock-down over a designated system. The alert will be made using a pre-selected code word. Provisions for emergency evacuation should be maintained even in the event of a lock-down. The Head of School will submit lock-down procedures as part of the building-specific Crisis Management Plan.
  - ii. *Evacuation Procedures.* Classroom, building, and campus evacuations may be implemented at the discretion of the Head of School or designee. The Crisis Management Plan will include procedures for transporting students and staff a safe distance from harm to a designated safe area until released by the Executive Director of School or designee, as appropriate. Safe areas may change depending on the emergency.

- iii. *Sheltering Procedures.* Sheltering provides refuge for students, staff, and visitors within the school building during an emergency. Shelters are safe areas that maximize the safety of inhabitants. Safe areas may change depending on the emergency. The Executive Director or designee, will announce the need for sheltering over a designated system. The Head of School will submit sheltering procedures for the building as part of the building-specific Crisis Management Plan.
  2. **Crisis-Specific Procedures.** The Crisis Management Plan shall include crisis-specific procedures for potential crisis situations that may occur during the school day or at school-sponsored events and functions.
  3. **Additional Procedures.** The school administration will present recommended early school closure, media and grief counseling procedures to the Board of Directors for review and approval. Upon approval, such procedures will be an addendum to this policy.
    - i. *Early School Closure Procedures.* The Executive Director of School or designee will make decisions about closing the school. The Executive Director of School or designee will make such decisions as early in the day as possible. The early school closure procedures will describe potential reasons for early school closure (weather-related or a crisis situation), will specify how the decision will be communicated to staff, students, families and the school community (including means such as broadcast media, local authorities, or a phone tree), and will discuss factors to be considered in closing and reopening a school or school building. The early school closure procedures also will include a process for reminding parents and guardians to listen to designated radio and TV stations for school closing announcements, where possible.
    - ii. *Media Procedures.* The Executive Director of School has the authority and discretion for notifying parents and guardians and the school community in the event of a crisis or early school closure.
    - iii. *Grief-Counseling Procedures.* The recommended grief counseling procedures will provide for initiating a grief-counseling plan utilizing available resources such as a school psychologist, counselor, community grief counselors, or others in the community. The grief-counseling procedures will be used whenever determined by the Head of School to be necessary, such as after an assault, a hostage situation, shooting, or suicide. The grief-counseling procedures should include the following steps:
      1. Meet with any school staff to determine the level of intervention for students and staff (was the crisis on campus, were there student or staff witnesses, etc.).
      2. Designate specific rooms as private counseling areas.
      3. Escort siblings and close friends of the victim(s) and other highly stressed students and staff to counselors.
      4. Prohibit the media from questioning students or staff.
      5. Follow-up with students and staff who receive counseling.
      6. Resume normal routines as soon as possible.

Upon approval, such grief counseling procedures will be an addendum to this policy.

4. **Facility Diagrams and Site Plans.** The school building will have a facility diagram and site plan showing at least the following: the location of primary and secondary evacuation routes,

exits, designated safe areas inside and outside of the building, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, and water spigots. The facility diagrams and site plans will be available in the office of the Head of School and in appropriate areas and will be kept on file in the school office.

5. **Emergency Telephone Numbers.** The school will maintain a current list of emergency telephone numbers and the names and addresses of local and county personnel who are likely to be involved in resolving a crisis situation. The list will include numbers for agencies such as the police, fire, ambulance, hospital, the Poison Control Center, local, county, and state emergency management agencies, local public works department, local utility companies, the public health nurse, mental health/suicide hotlines, and the county welfare agency, so that they may be contacted as appropriate. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the school office and will be updated annually.
6. **Crisis Response Team.**
  - i. *Composition.* The Executive of Director of School will select a crisis response team trained to respond in an emergency. All team members will be trained to carry out the building's Crisis Management Plan and have knowledge of procedures, evacuation routes, and safe areas. Team members must be willing to be actively involved with resolving crises and be available to assist when necessary. The school will maintain a current list of crisis response team members and update it annually. A copy of the list will be kept on file in the school office.
  - ii. *Leaders.* The Executive of Director of School serves as the leader of the crisis response team and the contact for emergency response officials. When they are present, emergency response agents may elect to take command and control of the situation. It is critical in this situation that school officials assume a resource role and are available to the emergency response personnel.
7. **Employees.** Teachers generally have the most direct contact with students on a day-to-day basis. As a result, they must be aware of their role in responding to crisis situations. This also applies to non-teaching school personnel who have direct contact with students. All staff should be aware of the Crisis Management Policy and the Crisis Management Plan. Employees shall receive a copy of the relevant building specific Crisis Management Plan and periodically shall receive training on plan implementation.
8. **Students and Parents/Guardians.** Students and parents/guardians shall be made aware of the school's Crisis Management Policy and Crisis Management Plans. Students shall receive specific instruction on plan implementation and shall participate in a required number of drill and practice sessions throughout the year.
9. **Warning Systems.**
  - i. The school shall maintain a warning system designed to inform students, employees, and visitors in the facilities of a crisis or emergency. This system shall be maintained on a regular basis.
  - ii. It shall be the responsibility of the Executive of Director of School to inform students and employees of the system and the means by which the system is used to identify the specific crisis or emergency involved.