

Board Monitoring System: Goal 2: A



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) exists to strengthen the social and economic foundation of Houston by assuring its youth the highest-quality elementary and secondary education available anywhere. In fulfilling this goal, HISD's Board of Education has designed a program to systematically monitor the district's goals and core values. The Board Monitoring System will report on each goal and core value on a routine basis. The goal currently under review is to increase emphasis on providing a safe environment (Goal 2, Section A).

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The HISD Police Department is dedicated to providing a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff, as well as visitors and residents of the communities served by the district, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The department's personnel include commissioned peace officers, crossing guards, prevention control (security) officers, substance abuse monitors, dispatchers and support staff.

The HISD Police Department, in an effort to decrease crime, will increase police visibility, increase uniform and plain clothes officers in and around schools, and implement more crime prevention initiatives. The HISD Police Department is currently involved in combining efforts with Crime Stoppers, the HISD Tip Line, and Ministers in Schools, to reduce and suppress criminal activities on district campuses.

Providing a Safe Environment

The HISD Police Department is implementing the following strategies as part of a comprehensive program to provide a safe environment for district schools.

1. Increase Police Visibility;
3. Assist At-Risk Students;
4. Track Gang And Drug Activity;
5. Increase Staffing And Training;
6. Implement GPS (Global Positioning System) For Patrol Units; And
7. Deploy Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers.

Objective One: Increase Police Visibility

The HISD Police Department is committed to having more patrol units in and around our campuses. Increasing the presence of patrol units will assist campuses with the opening and dismissal at schools and ensure a safe environment for individuals coming and going to school.

The Elementary Rover Program is designed to increase patrol visits to elementary campuses and has been implemented to provide more police visibility in and around the schools. For the program, nearly 200 elementary schools are divided among four officers. Officers in the program are responsible for making presentations, such as *Stranger Danger* and *Railroad*

Safety to elementary students and the community, throughout the district. The officers in the program are experienced with working on campus and patrol and were selected partially based on their ability to relate to the elementary age students. One of the main objectives of the program is to get elementary students to realize that police officers can be trusted and they are here to protect them.

Objective Three: Assist At-Risk Enrollment

The Leaver Program is a program that reaches out to those students that have either dropped out or have not returned to school. Each Region identifies these students and the Police Department assigns officers for evening visits to the students' home to try to get them back to school or to confirm their intentions. Through HISD's Leaver Program and other initiatives HISD police officers will continue to mentor these students and assist them in assimilating back into the education community.

Objective Four: Tracking Gang and Drug Activity

Students who have been committed to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and have been convicted of violent crimes may have a negative influence on other students. These students should be referred to alternative education campuses where they can complete their education. Allowing these students to mix with the general student population creates a safety issue for staff, students and police officers. To help identify these students the HISD Police Department has joined the F.B.I. and The Drug Enforcement Agency in tracking gangs and drugs not only in our schools but also in the community. Entering into partnerships with these agencies enhances the services that the HISD Police Department can offer our community. This initiative will also help give the HISD Police Department insight into future trends in the fight against drugs and gangs. Through this initiative the HISD Police Department will have access to a database of documented gang members that are often transient. This will allow for the HISD Police Department to receive and share critical information on students who transfer into HISD schools. Having access to this information will allow the department to be proactive at addressing gang activity in and around our schools.

Objective Five: Increase Training.

In order to meet the demands of the district and the population it serves, the HISD Police Department is committed to adding more management in-service training to the training agenda for supervisors while also continuing the training for officers and dispatchers. Officer training includes Report Writing, Spanish for Police Officers, Hostage and Crisis Intervention Training, (ALERRT) Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training and Community Oriented Policing Strategies. The dispatchers will receive crises intervention training along with other training related to their duties.

The HISD Police Department will continue to review its training policy and update its training goals to better serve the community.

Objective Six: GPS Global Positioning System

This application gives the Communications Division the ability to deploy and track patrol units in the field, respond to calls for service in a timely manner, and increase officer safety. The tool will also help provide greater officer visibility to campuses and communities.

Objective Seven: Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers.

The deployment of Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers identifies present and future trends of traffic management and enforcement. The Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers are currently

assigned to the North, South, East, West and Central regions. Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers are deployed based on an officer's, school administrator and or citizen's request. This initiative captures data, that can be used to track vehicles that may be speeding through HISD school zones, and acts as a deterrent to traffic violators. The data captured assists in providing traffic enforcement and the development of initiatives in high volume traffic areas. Radar Traffic Enforcement Trailers provide safer roads for the students of HISD.

Local Security Assessments and Audits

The HISD Police Department conducts security audits of all district owned and leased property. These audits are called Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Reports (CPTED's). These reports are required by state law and are generated on a yearly basis. Currently, all CPTED Reports are reviewed by supervisory staff and are forwarded to Board Services and then to Risk Management. Per State law, Education Code Sec 37.108 Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan: Security Act section (b), all school districts are required to complete a security audit every three years and forward the findings to the Texas School Safety Center. CPTED Training is given to all new police personnel. At the present, new CPTED Report formats are being researched to provide a more user friendly report

Increase Collaboration with Local Law Enforcement

In order to support federal, state and local law enforcement, the HISD Police Department currently maintains memorandums of understanding with the following law enforcement agencies as follows:

1. United States Secret Service;
2. Department of Public Safety (DPS), State of Texas – being updated;
3. Alvin ISD Police Department;
4. Bellaire Police Department;
5. Conroe ISD Police Department;
6. Galena Park Police Department;
7. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Two;
8. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Three;
9. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Six;
10. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Seven;
11. Harris County Sheriff's Office;
12. Houston Community College Police Department;
13. Houston Police Department;
14. Houston Police Department Gang Tracking;
15. Houston Police Department GREAT Program;
16. Jacinto City Police Department;
17. Katy ISD Police Department;
18. North Forest ISD Police Department;
19. Pasadena ISD Police Department;
20. Pasadena Police Department;
21. Pearland ISD Police Department;
22. South Side Place Police Department;
23. Spring Branch ISD Police Department;
24. Texas Southern University Police Department;
25. University of Houston – Central Park (Main Campus) Police Department;
26. University of Houston –Downtown Police Department; and
27. West University Police Department.

The HISD Police Department is currently in the process of establishing protocol agreements with the following agencies:

1. Federal Bureau of Investigations;
2. United States Drug Enforcement Administration;
3. Aldine ISD Police Department;
4. Alief ISD Police Department;
5. Fort Bend ISD Police Department;
6. Harris County District Attorney's Office;
7. Harris County Constables Office Precinct One;
8. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Four;
9. Harris County Constables Office Precinct Five;
10. Missouri City Police Department;
11. South Houston Police Department; and
12. Stafford ISD Police Department.

Police Department Assessment

On August 12, 2009, the Police Department received proposals for an organizational assessment of the department. In December the Police Department will recommend a vendor, for board approval, to complete this project. The assessment will review the following aspects of the Police Department:

- Functional Responsibilities and Organizational Structure;
- Performance Criteria;
- Accountability ;
- Staffing;
- Work Demand;
- Personnel Strengths and Weaknesses; and
- Performance Evaluation.

TRANSPORTATION

HISD Transportation Services is the largest single district provider of school bus service in the state of Texas. The department employs over 1,200 employees and operates 1,000 buses, which transport more than 40,000 students daily to and from school and other school related activities. The HISD bus fleet travels more than 80,000 miles per day and approximately 18 million miles annually. The Mission of HISD Transportation Services is to provide safe, efficient, and reliable transportation services to the students of HISD, so that they may access the educational and cultural opportunities provided by the district and become productive community members.

The HISD Transportation Department is implementing the following strategies as part of a comprehensive program to provide a safe environment for district schools.

Bus GPS Systems

Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, every HISD school bus was equipped with a GPS system. The ability to know instantaneously the location of every school bus in the fleet and the ability to be notified if a bus travels outside of a prescribed boundary enhances student safety. Utilization of the GPS system to quickly identify and correct route problems improves student safety by avoiding having students wait for extended periods at bus stop locations for bus arrivals.

Bus Camera Systems

895 of the district’s 960 school buses have been equipped with camera systems that assist with monitoring and improving student behavior on school busses. Every HISD school bus will be equipped with camera systems by the end of the 09-10 school year.

Improve Reliability

Bus breakdowns have been reduced by 42% improving reliability and student safety through stringent Preventative Maintenance Inspection programs.

CONSTRUCTION & FACILITY SERVICES

Construction and Facility Services (CFS) is responsible for providing safe, comfortable, and operational facilities that offer a beneficial learning environment for the children of Houston.

Summary of Life Safety Compliance Project

On February 1986, a new building code was adopted by the City of Houston that included a Life Safety Appendix. This appendix contained minimum requirements for all existing buildings built prior to January 1, 1986. Any building with a Certificate of Occupancy issued after February 5, 1986, is considered to be in compliance with the updated building code and does not require a separate Life Safety Compliance Certificate. Initially the district had 163 campuses without a Life Safety Compliance Certification. However, due to ongoing construction and renovation activity the total number has been reduced to 160 campuses.

In March 2005 the Board of Education approved \$2 million for the first phase of work needed to meet building code requirements. The investment has brought **26** campuses into compliance with the 1986 building code.

In September 2006, the Board of Education approved \$11.5 million for the second phase of work needed to meet building code requirements. The investment has brought **100** campuses into compliance with the 1986 building code.

In February 2009, the Board of Education approved \$3.5 million for the third phase of work needed to meet building code requirements. The following is an update of the remaining **34** schools

status	Life Safety Compliance Certificate Received	Working to Submit to City for Inspection	Inspections Complete: Awaiting Reports from City	City Report Received Awaiting Contractor Proposal	Contractor Correcting Violations
# of Schools	0	18	0	13	3

Facilities Capital Program Safety and Security Upgrades:

As a part of the bond proposal passed by voters in 2007, \$90.3 million in safety and security upgrades has been allocated for school improvements districtwide. These upgrades will include new fencing, security cameras, public address systems, fire alarms and sprinklers, emergency generators, site lighting, sidewalk repairs, emergency and exit lighting, and other site and facility improvements for safety and security.

By 12/31/09, CCTV will be installed in all schools and performance reviews with Construction Services and Facilities will be planned and under way.

Collaborative efforts with several departments including: Police, Facility Services and Construction Services have contributed to this project.

The top 2 significant initiative successes are:

Initiative Successes	Factors That Supported Success
HISD Standard for CCTV	Collaboration with stakeholders (Construction, Maintenance, Police and Principals)
Cost reductions for security camera system	1. RFP for CCTV vendors 2. Timing, volume and favorable market conditions

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES: SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) sponsor several districtwide activities throughout the year to assist schools in implementing a comprehensive violence and drug-use prevention program. These events, designed to educate and heighten awareness, encourage participation from students, parents, school personnel, and the community.

Substance Use Data

Table 1. PEIMS Reported Rate and Change for Substance Use.

Violation	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	Annual Percentage Change*
Controlled Substance	1876	989	736	754	+2.5%
Alcohol	78	44	62	38	-38.7%
Tobacco	150	132	94	102	+8.6
Total Violations	2104	1165	892	894	+ .23%
Total Population	204418	209879	202449	200225	-1.0%

*Above changes are from 2007-08 to 2008-09; positive changes indicate increases, negative changes indicate decreases. It is evident from Table 1 that campus-based alcohol use violations significantly decreased from the 2007-08 to 2008-09 school years. However, there was a slight increase in controlled substance and tobacco use from the last school year.

Violence Data

Table 2. PEIMS Reported Rate and Change for Violence.

Incidents of Violence	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	Annual Percent Change*
Firearms	16	14	13	12	-1%
Illegal Knife	24	13	4	6	+50%
Prohibited Weapon	38	6	25	34	+26%
Assault employee	173	45	34	44	+30%
Assault not employee	495	302	187	189	+1%
Agg. Assault employee	5	0	0	6	+600%
Agg. Assault not employee	29	12	3	4	+33%
Sexual assault employee	1	0	0	0	0%
Sexual assault not employee	1	1	2	0	-200%
Gang	148	147	30	20	-33%
Mutual combat	7147	4232	4590	4233	-8%
Displaying/possessing non-illegal knife	137	N/A	112	90	-20%
Total incidents	8214	4772	5000	4638	-7.2%
Total Population	204418	209879	202449	200225	-1.0%

Table 2 reflects a breakdown of the violent incidents that occurred during the 2008-09 school year and the three years arranged by category. Changes are from 2007-08 to 2008-09; positive changes indicate increases, negative changes indicate decreases. It is evident from table 2; there has been a significant decrease in most areas of school base violence. However, there was a significant increase in prohibited weapon and Agg. Assault on employees.

Establish a Plan to Address Safe School Choice Options (SSCO)

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) Department has:

- Completed a training module that includes awareness, prevention and intervention.
- Distributed the training module and provided regional training to all building administrators or their designees, district psychologists, and police personnel.
- Reviewed data to identify schools with SSCO incidents and provided support through the SDFSC Department.

- Collaborated with Federal and State Compliance, HISD Police Department, Technology, Research and Accountability, the Legal Department to ensure proper reporting in alignment with SSCO mandates.
- Assisted schools in applying appropriate coding and worked as an advocate with the District Attorney's office in the best interest of the school. In more than 90 percent of cases to which SDFSC responded the number of incidents incorrectly attributed to campuses were reduced.
- Provided direct services to schools and principals, raising the level of knowledge, awareness, and confidence in the area of SSCO.
- Convened several meetings between SDFSC and Technology and Information Services to create a system of reporting SSCO data immediately. This is cutting-edge because non-duplicated data of incidents occurring by campus will now be available much sooner; previously, this data was generally not available until the end of August each year.
- Been named the responsible party for the district's discipline data.
- Provided SSCO training to principals or their designee's during Federal and State Compliance regional discipline training.

Challenges

There are inconsistencies in reporting procedures. State law mandates that the area within 1,000 feet of a school campus, a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus, be a drug-free and weapon-free zone. Incidents occurring in these areas automatically receive an "enhancement" by the District Attorney's Office. For example, if an incident would normally be classified as a Class A misdemeanor but occurred within the 1,000 feet boundary, it is then classified as a state jail-felony charge; similarly, a Class B misdemeanor would become a Class A misdemeanor. A request has been made for guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) that is clear and consistent across the state.

An unfortunate result of this state law is that some schools have accepted responsibility for incidents that have occurred off-campus, because school officials do not have a clear understanding of the mandate. In some cases, police officers record the school address as the offense site rather than reporting the address where the incident actually occurred. Stronger coordination between the District Attorney's office, TEA, and the district is needed to ensure this state mandate is consistently implemented.

Augment Internet Safety Plan

- Provided Internet Safety Training to parents, students, and school-based staff through the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Department.
- The Guidance and Counseling Department provided training to school-based counselors.
- Psychological Services provided handouts and information to parents and students on a case-by-case basis.

Challenges

The proliferation of material available on the internet, the increased unsupervised access to computers and the internet among students, and the use of email and personal web pages for bullying and intimidation continue to be a problem among youth. Intervention and education in this area must continue in order to reduce harm to students who may become victims, and to reduce the likelihood for youth to become engaged in internet behaviors that lead them into

dangerous relationships or legal difficulties. Resources to provide information and training, appropriate internet blocking software, and advocacy for adult supervision of student internet use is needed.

Analysis of Student Services and Gaps in the Delivery of Services

In 2005-2006, Student Support Services conducted an internal survey to determine the duties and responsibilities of counselors and to assess gaps in services. Survey results highlighted the following concerns:

- Counselors are unable to implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, a legal requirement of this position, due to excessive administrative and clerical responsibilities, particularly relating to standardized testing;
- At some campuses, counselors have been reassigned to positions, such as assistant principal or dean of students;
- Most elementary campuses do not have an assigned counselor; and
- Survey results concluded that HISD has the highest counselor/student ratio in all districts studied in the state, an average of 1:811 as compared to TEA standards of 1:350.

The Student Support Services Department continues to promote and advocate for the role of the counselor. In the 2007-08 school year, campus visits will be conducted to inform of program benefits, address concerns and support campuses with implementing comprehensive guidance programs.

Challenges

To fully implement the safety plan, added personnel and/or a contracted services provider, and financial resources are required. To maintain necessary data integrity, annual assessments must be conducted; additional resources will be required to accomplish this.

Establish a Baseline Standard of Prevention Education Services for All Students

- Baseline standards are currently being developed in collaboration with the Sam Houston State University Counselor Education Program.
- In order to eliminate duplication of efforts, the district level Advisory Support Services Committee will be integrated with the SDFSC advisory forum and will meet quarterly beginning in the 2007-2008 school year. The first meeting will be scheduled in September 2007.
- Through district wide and regional counselor/social worker meetings, training on the development and implementation of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program to include current drug and violence prevention strategies will be provided.

Challenges

There are many schools without the certified counselors needed to carry-out the development and implementation of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program. As a result, many students do not receive the benefits of this service, thus future efforts will be made to resolve the inequity between campuses.

There have been continual cuts in SDFSC and Guidance & Counseling personnel. In addition, counselor duties and responsibilities have evolved into a quasi-administrative role. However, students' social/emotional needs continue to increase. The district invests in quality research-based programs to meet these needs. Without a qualified counselor to provide these programs and services at **all** schools, prevention becomes secondary to intervention thereby negating efforts to provide safe and equitable learning environments.

Provide Prevention Education Services for Parents and Community

- The SDFSC Department coordinated with the Parent Engagement Department to provide districtwide community prevention education and developmental asset-based parenting strategies.
- The Student Support Services Department offered learning opportunities to parents to equip them with the necessary information to develop their children's decision-making abilities. Training was based on proven scientific and research-based strategies and included the following:
 - Introduced parents to the Project GRAD Parent University.
 - Supported schools, parent/teacher associations, and community-based organizations by providing drug and violence related training, developmental assets support, participation in health fairs, and by creating and implementing youth development opportunities.
 - Presented to parents throughout the district at various regional meetings and responded to crisis situations.
 - Participated in and conducted workshops at various venues including the National Association of College Admissions Counseling College Fair, the Houston Hispanic Forum Career and Education Day, the Senior Expo, and the Houston Community College (HCC) College Day.
 - Developed coalitions through sustained partnerships with community stakeholders such as parent groups, advocacy groups, and faith-based coalitions.

Challenges

- Lack of personnel to respond to the growing demand for services in every area of Student Support Services constricts the amount of time that personnel can devote to prevention activities and postvention services. Coordination of services among departments is still evolving.

Intervention

- All School Support Services Departments met with Risk-Management and other departments to review and edit the Emergency Preparedness Manual (Redbook).
- The SDFSC Department responded to press-release notification of incidents that could possibly fall under SSCO guidelines.
- Psychological Services presented to all school-based counselors, new teachers, and social workers on *Coming Together to Care for Students Who Wish to Harm Themselves or Others*.
- Psychological Services developed and presented an all-day workshop to HISD police on the subject *Coming Together to Care: Keeping Students Safe*.
- Psychological Services provided suicide prevention and risk assessment continuing education to district and community mental health providers.
- Psychological Services developed a suicide prevention training module for all district counselors and contracted mental health providers.
- Facilitated crisis response preparedness through three-hour All District Crisis Team Meetings in Fall and Spring semesters; reviewed crisis response skills and

implemented tabletop practice exercises. Meetings were facilitated by Psychological Services.

Challenges

Sufficient resources are needed to ensure that intervention and after-crisis care (postvention) systems are in place to provide a high level of response to students and campuses in crisis situations. A quality, timely response can help schools return to teaching and learning more quickly when student and teacher crisis needs are addressed using a common best practices model.

The group crisis intervention training manuals based on the NOVA model (National Organization for Victim Assistance) must be updated after this year to maintain accuracy and a level of certified individuals who can deliver services using a common model that is congruent with national standards. Additional funding for the 2008–2009 school year will be needed.

Additional funding for travel to national certification conferences is necessary because peer group is not local, but national. As the seventh largest school district in the nation, HISD maintains the largest team of certified responders in the nation and is often involved in setting local, state, and national standards.

FOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT

HISD Food Services is dedicated to serving quality, nutritious meals to students everyday. To ensure the safety of the program, the Food Services Department has established a safety plan and a department emergency plan to protect students and staff..

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)

Texas Department of Agriculture has mandated all school food authorities to fully implement a comprehensive food safety program for the preparation and service of school meals to children. The program must be based on HACCP principles and conform to the guidance set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture. The HACCP program identifies potentially hazardous foods or procedures in the food service areas. HACCP guidelines help create custom standard operating procedures to categorize and manage the process of meals from farm to plate. The HISD/ARAMARK Food Services Department has setup seven steps in our HACCP program.

1. Identify food related hazards within the Food Services Department.
2. Identify critical control points that define hazards and establish ways to prevent, eliminate, or reduce these hazards.
3. Setup critical limits on procedures and standards that are required to be followed by HISD employees.
4. Systemic review by various departments including Quality Control, Quality Assurance, Process Reviewers, and Food Service Operations to ensure HACCP standards are followed.
5. Consistent review of our HACCP program focusing on finding long term solutions to always improve our program.
6. Kitchen logs that monitor temperatures, standard operating procedures and documentation to ensure HISD employees are adhering to HACCP guidelines.
7. Quarterly review of the HACCP team to ensure HISD program is following internal and external verification.

Quality Control / Quality Assurance

HISD/ARAMARK Food Services recognizes that healthy students perform better in school. The Quality Control and Quality Assurance Departments work behind the scenes each day to make sure that all kitchens and the central production facility have the capability to produce high-quality meals for the students of HISD.

Sanitation and food safety are a top priority to this department; however, they are also responsible for inspecting and sampling all products delivered to the food service warehouse and central production before they are sent to the schools. At the Food Services Support Facility, the Quality Assurance Inspectors check the food items for consistency in quality and also gauge the items for proper storage temperatures and handling. In the school kitchens, the Quality Control Inspectors will not receive any item that does not meet the requirements for safe consumption as described in our HACCP Program.

The Quality Control Inspectors will inspect and audit every school kitchen two or three times a school year to ensure all HACCP requirements are followed. The inspectors work with Food Service Operations to correct all problems and hands-on training is conducted by inspectors in the kitchens. In addition, the City of Houston Health Department will inspect all HISD kitchens twice a year and coordinate with the Quality Control Inspectors to follow-up on any issues.

The Quality Assurance Inspectors monitor activities in the Food Services Support Facility's central production areas. The inspectors work closely with production staff to ensure food is prepared to the highest safety standards.

Food Services Support Facility Emergency Plan

The HISD/ARAMARK Food Services Support Facility emergency evacuation plan identifies potential emergency situations that could occur in facilities where employees work. The required emergency preparation and emergency response procedures have been presented to employees and drills were conducted in May 2009. The intent of the plan is to prepare for emergency situations and provide for effective emergency response. Life safety is always the top priority in a fire or any other emergency. Fire prevention and emergency response procedures shall be included in the safety orientation training of all employees. Safe paths shall be maintained inside facilities from all occupied locations to safe refuge areas outside the building for use in case of an emergency that requires evacuation. Clear and unobstructed access to fire detection, alarms, and fire suppression equipment shall be maintained inside all facilities.

Priorities during an emergency at this facility are, in order:

- Life safety
- Property protection
- Prevention of business interruption

Food Service Emergency Readiness Plan

The HISD/ARAMARK Food Services Department has a robust food safety program. In the face of increasing food recalls, the growing risk of food borne illness, and the more frequent impact of flooding from natural disasters, the Food Services Department has developed this

Food Services Emergency Readiness Plan. The primary goal of this plan is to ensure the safety and security of the HISD food system and to safeguard HISD students, staff, and facilities while meeting Food Services' obligations to provide safe, nutritious food. The Food Services Emergency Readiness Plan is the primary plan for food response activities for the district and serves as a component of its Emergency Operations Plan.

To prepare HISD Food Services staff to respond efficiently and seamlessly to an emergency specifically involving a hurricane or a food recall, whether triggered by a manufacturer or through suspicion of the presence of a food borne pathogen; certain protocol, procedures, assignment of responsibilities and communication flows have been developed. These are to be adopted and adapted to real-time needs, then trained in and exercised by staff. This Food Services Emergency Readiness Plan establishes the protocol for action, outlines the procedures to be followed, identifies critical personnel and their roles and responsibilities, and creates a communications protocol.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management plays a vital role in the emergency communications link in HISD, as identified in the *Emergency Preparedness Plan*.

The Risk Management Safety and Loss Control staff serves as the district-wide technical resource for concerns relative to student and employee safety and health issues.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The purpose of the *Emergency Preparedness Plan* is to provide campus-based employees a comprehensive resource of guidelines and recommended procedures for use during emergency situations to enhance their understanding and collaboration of roles, responsibilities, and duties, for protection of students entrusted to their care.

The *Emergency Preparedness Plan* has been updated and distributed to school administrators. This plan is available on-line on the HISD Employee Portal at <https://www.houstonisd.org/RiskManagement/EmergencyPlan.pdf> . Training has been provided to school administrators on the updated *Manual*, including changes from prior version additions and use of the on-line *Manual*. Additional training of school leaders is being conducted on an on-going basis.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Each governmental entity is required to develop and maintain an overall plan to respond to various identified emergencies based on general guidelines established by the Office of Homeland Security.

A draft of the Emergency Operations Plan has been developed and prepared by Risk Management. It has had some internal review but needs additional modification before submission to the Superintendent of schools. Ecology and Environmental, Inc. was hired to assist in the development of the Emergency Operations Plan and to:

- Conduct a system-level emergency preparedness gap analysis, including reviewing the existing plan, external plans, reports, and obtaining stakeholder input:
- Compile data obtained through conventional risk assessment and gap analysis processes;

- Identify jurisdictional, operational, and administrative relationships among internal and external emergency preparedness and response partners, and among their respective plans and procedures;
- Identify assumptions and expectations of external partners including the Red Cross, city/county Office of Emergency Management, public health agencies, and others to be determined;
- Identify key positions within HISD that support response efforts and creating facility and district-wide teams based upon the National Incident Management System concept;
- Identify inter-local agreements and/or contracts for use of facilities or other assets;
- Create capabilities-based strategic and tactical tasks linked to school response plans;
- Establish communications protocols;
- Developing new plan content to enhance prevention and mitigation measures; and;
- Establish disaster recovery procedures including damage assessment and cost recovery.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The *Emergency Preparedness Plan* is a subset of the *Emergency Operations Plan*. The purpose of the *Emergency Preparedness Plan* is to provide campus-based employees a comprehensive resource of guidelines and recommended procedures for use during emergency situations to enhance their understanding and collaboration of roles, responsibilities, and duties, for protection of students entrusted to their care.

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Multi-Year Property Loss Arrangement

HISD has developed a multi-year arrangement with an independent property loss adjuster to document damages to district facilities. This documentation will be in a format that can be easily supplied to the Office of Construction & Facility Services so that work can be initiated in a timely manner while also documenting district losses to the insurance carrier. A contract has been developed with the selected bidder and is in place. This firm is currently assisting HISD with our loss due to Hurricane Ike.

Safety/Security Councils (SSC)

To help operational departments achieve the HISD safety and security mission, the Risk Management Department has provided departments with a procedures booklet titled:

“Guidelines for Developing Effective Department Level Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness Councils.” The booklet outlines the responsibilities of the Department Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Council.

The Department Level Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Council plays an intricate role in supporting the district-wide comprehensive safety and security program to effectively prevent accidents and injuries, violence, and damage to district property.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Services provides communication support to central administration offices and departments, regional offices, and to the schools while developing and implementing communication solutions on a districtwide level to both employees and the public.

Promoting Safety Stories

In addition to the many stories that the HISD Media Relations Office promotes to local and national media, are safety-related stories. These include health-related stories such as the district’s preparations for the H1N1 flu virus, improvements in food safety and quality thanks to HISD’s new food production facility, and predator alerts. Since October 2008, the Media Relations Office has been recommending that schools send out credible predator alerts via automated phone messages and letters. The Media Relations Office assists in the crafting of these messages which have been well-received by parents and generated positive stories in local media. In many cases the district is able to alert parents of an incident that occurred in the morning before children are dismissed from school that same afternoon. This gives parents the ability to make security decisions about their child’s trip home and results in more eyes and ears in the neighborhood looking for potential predators.

While it is not currently possible through the TV clipping service that Media Relations uses to track stories specific to safety, it may be possible in the not too distant future. The service is in the process of updating software and capabilities. By including safety initiatives in the board monitoring system, numerous opportunities will be available to garner local press coverage of safety issues. More positive safety-related stories in the local media may result in more favorable public opinions regarding HISD’s safety efforts.

Tracking Progress in Bi-Annual HISD Public Opinion Polls:

One metric by which communication efforts regarding safety in HISD can be tracked is through the bi-annual public opinion polls. The most recent poll provides baseline data on public perceptions and divides the responses and percentages into HISD parents and non-parents. An increase in the confidence level among both groups in the area of safety in the 2009 poll will provide a good indication how effective HISD is delivering safety messages to the public.

Media Training for Key Safety Spokespersons

Media training is needed for all key safety spokespersons. Through HISD’s new Communications and Publications Office, in-house media training is being planned. Such training would help spokespersons be more at ease and confident on-camera. Perceptions are important in communicating messages to the public.

The Role of HISD Internal and External Communications

HISD will coordinate and deliver safety-related communications using printed publications, electronic communications (e.g., e-mail messages to employees and to the public, electronic publications such as *eNews*, on-hold messages on district phone systems, and updates on the emergency/weather hotline (713-267-1704)), the Web portal, the HISD cable TV channel, and through press releases and conferences. This strategy involves increasing the number of safety-related stories and messages through these various communication vehicles and outlets, as well as exploring new opportunities and strategies (e.g., using social media such as Twitter and/or Facebook).

Since the number of safety-related stories has not been tracked through HISD communication vehicles, there is no baseline data for comparison. However, the number of page views on safety stories posted on the HISD Web portal is available.

HISD can use the Connect-ED telephone messaging system to deliver important news. The district obviously does not want to overuse this important communications tool—but, if for instance, there is an overall drop in crime on HISD campuses we can deliver that good news directly to our parents through a Connect-ED message.