OBJECTIVE

To develop an emergency response plan that ensures the safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff during and after a damaging earthquake.

"I think planning that includes all staff, certificated and classified, and all students is important. You don't know beforehand who is going to be available and at the school site at the time of an earthquake."

Ron Staley
Earthquake Preparedness Program Coordinator
Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Watsonville, CA

Response procedures can be as simple as a checklist, but it is important that all staff is familiar with the procedures and that a wide range of possible events have been discussed in the preparation of those procedures.

Your emergency procedures are the core of your school's earthquake plan. How well your teams can carry out their responsibilities will, of course, depend on how well each of them has prepared before the earthquake. Actions to be taken before an earthquake are suggested in each of the checklists in this section. In addition, your teams should have had sufficient drills and training so that they can automatically and confidently perform necessary tasks (see Sections 1 and 6).
"Of course, there was a great deal of excitement in the area (October 17th, 1989). There were gas leaks in the immediate vicinity of the central offices. You could smell the gas. People were coming out of the homes nearby and going onto the high school football fields and play fields which happen to be next to the central office. Others were coming by in their cars. You could tell the people were very frightened. With the fire engine sirens screaming, the police sirens going, you knew that there was a great deal of trouble and you could see the red glow of fire in the area."

James Baker, Superintendent (retired)
Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Watsonville, CA

**KEEP IN MIND**

Keep lists, procedures and responsibilities as simple and straightforward as possible. The earthquake will not be the time to extricate a cumbersome plan from the cabinet.

Practice, practice, practice so that expected actions are rote and automatic.

Have backup for every necessary procedure in your plan.

Be sure it is clear at all times who is in charge and who makes what decisions.
ACTIVITIES

1. If your staff has not already been divided into the teams recommended in Section I (see *Summary of the Earthquake Planning Process*), consider doing so now.

2. Using the *Emergency Response Checklists* as a guide, have each team discuss its responsibilities after an earthquake. Remind staff that actions taken before an earthquake can greatly improve their ability to respond during and after an earthquake. Encourage staff to brainstorm expected actions, and to expand on the checklists provided.

"No doors would open, no doors would open at all (after the October 17th, 1989 earthquake). We have no windows that open so anyone who had been in those buildings would have been trapped unless they had thrown a chair through a window to get out. And some of the rooms actually don't have windows so there would have been no way of knowing if there were people in there unless they were screaming, and no way to get an injured person out."

Kenneth Simpkins, Superintendent
Loma Prieta Joint Elem. School District
Los Gatos, CA
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL / ADMINISTRATOR

BEFORE:

• Maintain staff awareness.
• Hold drills and conduct / arrange training.
• Oversee identification of nonstructural hazards.
• Establish a release policy and determine how this policy will be communicated to parents.
• Familiarize yourself with district arrangements for immediate damage assessment after a damaging earthquake.
• Take an inventory of the staff for skills that may be useful in earthquake planning -- ham radio operator, bi-lingual, etc.
• Evaluate records with the district and determine if there are any where a back-up copy should be stored off-site.
• Make sure the area to be used as an emergency operations center contains a map of the school site and an enrollment sheet for the current year.
• Develop a release plan for your staff that takes into account who has families and other responsibilities outside of school.
• Establish a school bus policy if a damaging earthquake occurs while students are enroute to or from school.
• Ensure essential considerations are provided for special needs students.

DURING:

• Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.
AFTER:

- Account for all staff and students.
- Implement and coordinate emergency operations.
- Control internal and external communications -- including contact with the enroute school buses, district and city agencies by radio, runner, etc.
- Decide on the need for evacuation and other critical issues. Keep record of events, decisions and actions.
- Designate a spokesperson for the press.
- If there is the slightest suspicion that the school has suffered structural damage make contact with the district architect or a structural engineer, according to the district plan.
- An evacuation outdoors should be ordered if the structural integrity of the building is in doubt. Nonstructural damage would not necessarily require an evacuation.
- In communication with district, assess overall situation -- how long students might be at school, how supplies might be distributed, if students will be sheltered at school, etc. Be prepared to have the Red Cross or local government designate the school as a shelter.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

BEFORE:

- Maintain current class lists. Keep them in a safe, easily accessible place.
- Keep the classroom emergency kit in a safe, accessible place, probably near the door.
- Participate fully in school drills, encouraging students as well.
- If the teacher or aide has an emergency response team assignment, make sure there is a back-up to take control of the classroom and students.
- Provide instruction to students on earthquakes and earthquake preparedness.
- Test any special response procedure for special needs students during earthquake drills.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings. To demonstrate continued authority, teachers might consider counting very loudly over the noise of the earthquake (most earthquakes last for 4 to 30 seconds—a very large earthquake might last 60 second).
- Ensure mobility impaired students are moved to safety spot, i.e., doorway. (See Appendix 3.)
AFTER:

- If an evacuation is ordered, take students out of building, with emergency cards. Request assistance from Evacuation Team for mobility impaired students if necessary.
- Know the procedures for getting first aid or other help to students who need it.
- Report missing students.
- Calm frightened students.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

MAINTENANCE STAFF
(INCLUDES CUSTODIAL AND FOOD WORKERS),

BEFORE:

- Assist the Planning Committee and/or Administrator in the identification of nonstructural hazards.
- With direction from the Planning Committee and/or Administrator, assist in the reduction of nonstructural hazards.
- Maintain inventory of food supplies. Include dietary requirements of special needs students.
- Assist the Planning Committee in developing options in the event evacuation is required during inclement weather.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

- Check utilities and do whatever necessary to minimize further danger. Determine which utilities still work and which don't. Report findings to the EOC.
- Make a note of structural and nonstructural damage when checking utilities. Report any identified damage to the EOC.
- Assist in evacuation, if one is required.
• Set up emergency sanitation system or procedures. Ensure they meet the needs of special needs students. Be sure not to use water or toilets until lines have been checked for breakage.
• Use emergency water supplies (including water from hot water heaters, etc.).
• Inventory supplies of food available to feed students and staff and begin planning distribution of food.
• If evacuation is required during inclement weather take actions for protection of students, faculty and staff from the weather.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

FIRST AID TEAM

BEFORE:

- Make sure that first aid supplies are up to date and always complete.
- Keep emergency cards (list of medical resources in area) and health cards (for each employee and pupil) up to date.
- Make sure training of staff expected to administer first aid is up-to-date.
- Be aware of special needs students' medical requirements and ensure they are provided extra medication while at school or enroute.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

- Report immediately to the Administrator (Emergency Operations Center).
- Administer first aid and record all cases and treatments.
- Determine need for further medical assistance. Coordinate requests for assistance through the Administrator.
- Assign First Aid Team members to accompany Search and Rescue Teams during their search operations.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

BEFORE:

- Make sure needed supplies (crowbar, hard hat, etc.) are on site.
- Make sure team members stay current with their training.
- Any special response technique for special needs students must be tested during earthquake drills.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

- According to pre-established pattern, check (visually, vocally, physically) every room in the building. Report location of injured to First Aid Team. Report location of other problems to Administrator (Emergency Operators Center).
- Look for obvious structural problems/significant structural damage as sweep is made through the building(s)--report any damage to the Administrator (Emergency Operations Center).
- Mobility impaired students, if possible, should be allowed to instruct rescuer on best way to move them from the hazardous area, (i.e., fireman's carry may be injurious to a person with respiratory problems).
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

SITE SECURITY TEAM

BEFORE:

• Work with the Planning Committee, the School Administrator and the District to establish a release policy and communicate this policy to parents and staff. Develop procedures for how release will be handled with non-English speaking parents.

DURING:

• Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

• Lock all external gates and doors, and secure buildings. (Note: Be sure locked doors can be opened from inside to prevent entrapment.) Station one team member at main gate/front door to deal with community/parents. Have that member route fire, police, rescue and medical to area of need. Keep the Administrator (Emergency Operations Center) informed of activities.
• Release students according to pre-arranged policy.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

FIRE SAFETY TEAM

BEFORE:

- Make sure fire fighting equipment (extinguishers, etc.) is in working order and that staff has received training in its use.
- Ensure that all nonstructural earthquake hazards that can be cause of fire (i.e. hot water tank) are properly secured.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture legs if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

- Check for and confirm existence of fire. Report location to Administrator (Emergency Operations Center) and Site Security.
- Control fire, if possible.
- Look for conditions that may cause a fire to develop and seek maintenance staff assistance in removal of condition.
- Rescue any personnel or students at risk.
- Secure areas.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

EVACUATION TEAM

BEFORE:

- Keep plans for designated emergency assembly area current.
- Make sure that necessary supplies are accessible.
- Assist the Planning Committee in developing options in the event evacuation is required during inclement weather.
- Be prepared for special equipment needs for mobility impaired students.
- Any special response procedure for special needs students must be tested during earthquake drills.

DURING:

- Duck, cover and hold at first sign of earthquake. Hold on to furniture leas if furniture moves. If outside, move away from buildings.

AFTER:

- Ensure that emergency assembly area is accessible and safe.
- Report to Administrator (Emergency Operations Center). Determine need for help in evacuation. Assist in evacuation.
- Take roll call and report group status to Administrator (Emergency Operations Center).
- Implement inclement weather evacuation plan if necessary.
EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

BUS SAFETY TEAM

BEFORE:

- Know school policy for procedures in the event a damaging earthquake occurs while buses with students are enroute to or from school.
- Assist Communications Committee in providing 2-way radio communications capability between buses and school Administrators.
- Take First Aid Training.
- Develop plans to assist special needs students.

DURING:

- Pull over to side of road if possible in the open. (Not under an overpass or bridge, along side buildings or trees.)
- Instruct the passengers to crouch down between seats and in isle until shaking has stopped.
- Ensure special needs students are assisted.

AFTER:

- Assist any injured students providing First Aid as needed.
- Establish communications with School Operations Center.
- Implement school policy for earthquake occurrence while students enroute to or from school.
- If condition of bus and transportation routes allow movement of bus proceed cautiously.
- If crossing a bridge is necessary; stop bus, get out and physically inspect bridge if damage is apparent to make judgment that bridge is safe for bus passage. If not, follow established school policy regarding the continued movement/ release of the students.
- Console uninjured students.