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# Emergency Management for Schools: Key Considerations

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# Presentation Overview

- **Readiness and Emergency Management Grant Competition**
- **Why should a school have and Emergency Management plan?**
- **Ten elements school emergency management plans should include**
- **Lessons learned**
- **Available resources**





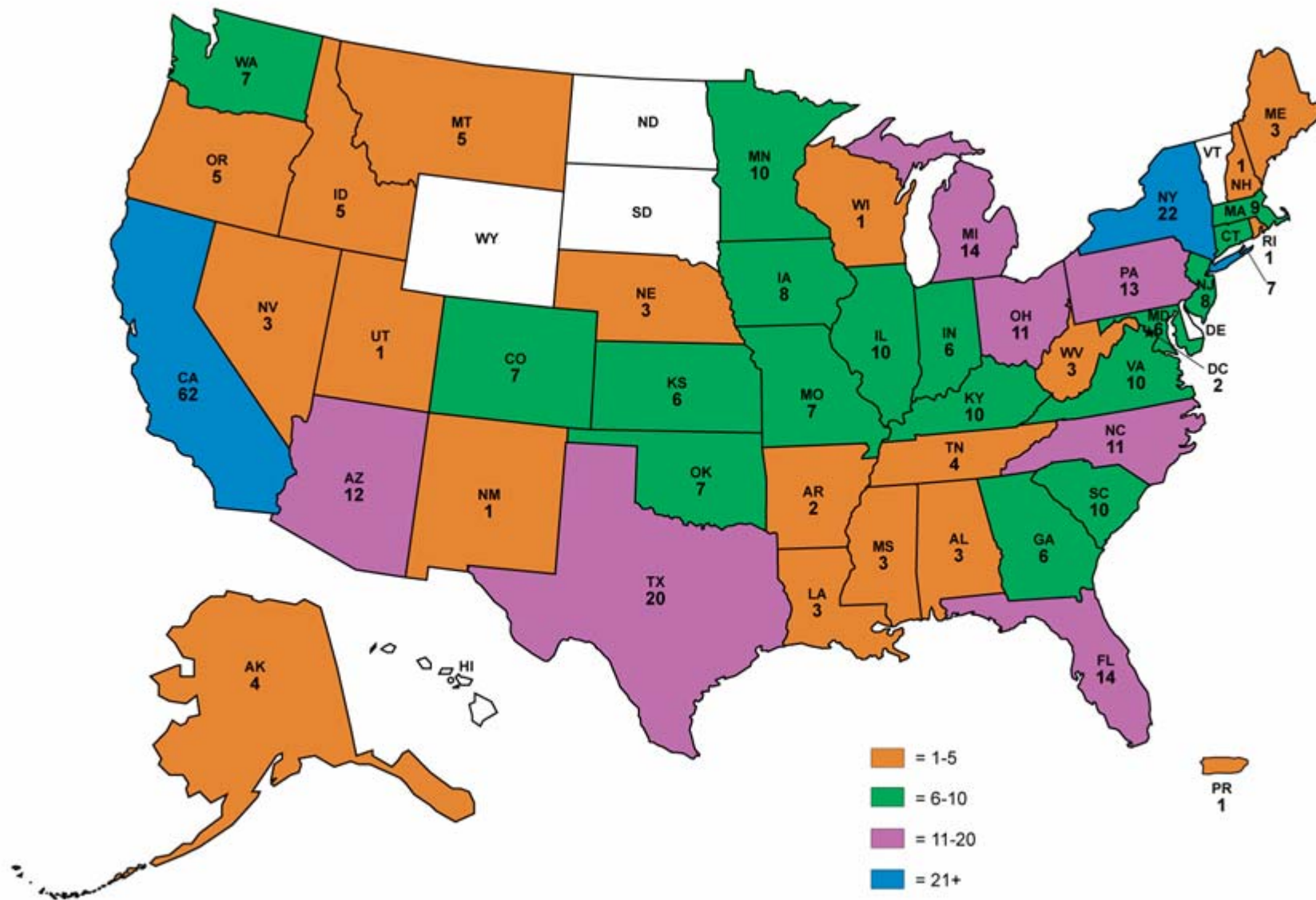
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# Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Grant

- **Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Discretionary Grant Competition:**
  - Formerly known as the Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) grant;
  - Funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools to assist with school emergency management planning.
  - Purpose is to provide resources to local educational agencies to improve and enhance emergency management plans.
  - Since fiscal year 2003, 413 ERCM grants have been awarded to LEAs in 44 states and Puerto Rico.



# FY 2003-2006 Combined Emergency Response and Crisis Management LEA Grant Recipients (N=367)



\*Note: Between FY 2003-2006, 413 ERCM grants were awarded. Of those 413 awards, 46 grantees received awards in more than one funding year.

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# Why should a school have an emergency management plan?



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# Stuff Happens!

And we either plan to deal with it when it happens and thereby help minimize its consequences, or we let it take control and steer us in directions we may not want to go!



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# Stuff Happens!

- **Every day!**
- **Along a continuum!**
- **In almost every district!**
- **To a variety of different populations (e.g., students/faculty)!**
- **When least expected!**



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# Recent Events

- **May 5, 2007: Greensburg, Kansas: Tornado destroys town, killing approximately 8 persons.**
- **April 16, 2007: Shooter kills 32 students at Virginia Tech.**
- **May 2007: Montgomery County, MD, Fire and Rescue workers were called to a school after a student brought a broken thermometer to school.**
- **March 2007: A 14-year old Shikellamy School District [PA] student admitted in court that she threatened to kill students and teachers.**
- **March 2007: A 15-year old Timber Creek HS [FL] baseball player went into cardiac arrest during a game, persons at the game started CPR and an Automatic External Defibrillator was brought in. Because of quick action he recovered.**
- **March 2007: A student trying to reconcile with his girl friend in a school parking lot [Clare, MI] pulled a gun from his backpack and shot his girlfriend 4 times. He then committed suicide. It was the second suicide in the rural community in a month.**





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# Other Events

- **Jan 2007:** An 84-year old woman drove her car through a cafeteria wall killing an 8-year old student and injuring two others. [Shiloh, Illinois]
- **Feb 2007:** The El Paso ES in Derby, Kansas had to go into lock down while police with guns drawn apprehended a suspect across the street from the school. The police did not notify the school of their actions.
- **August 2006:** A 27-year old who recently broke up with his girlfriend, a teacher at Essex ES [VT], he shot two other teachers when he could not find her. One of the teachers died.
- **April 2007:** Numerous schools and colleges in VA and Maryland received bomb threats and threats of attacks similar to the one at Virginia Tech.



# Greensburg High School – Before Tornado



# Greensburg High School – After Tornado



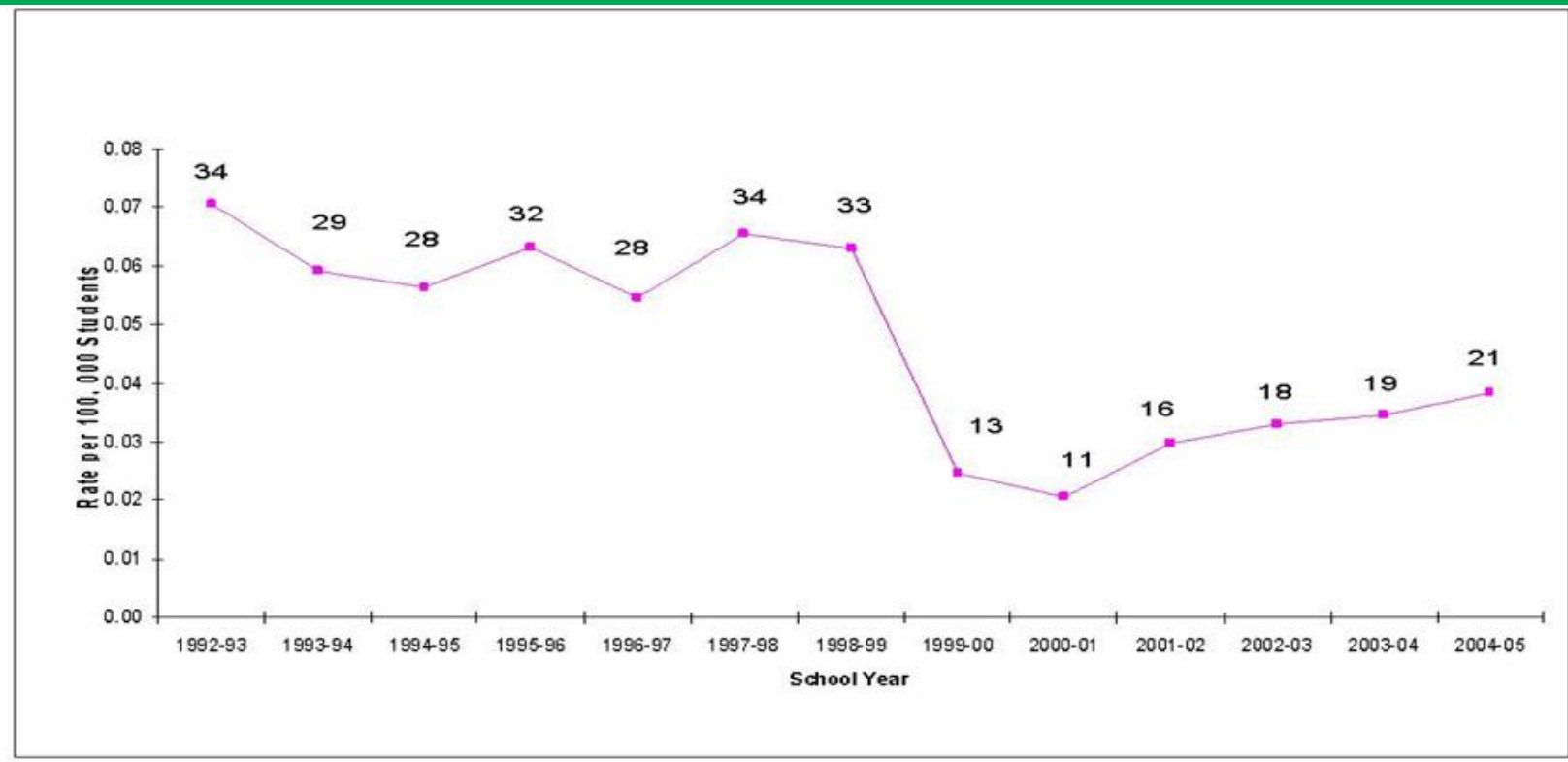
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# Why Have a Plan?

- 4.2 million youth have asthma attacks (some in schools)
- 4 million children and adolescents injured at school
- 582,800 incidents of violent crime in school (2004)
- 200,000 playground injuries
- 107,400 incidents of serious violent crime (2004)
- 1,285 suicides (age 15-18) in community (2003-2004)
- 51,000 students hurt on school buses (2001-2003)
- 36,000 chemical exposures in schools (2003)
- 21 students homicide victims in school, and 1,437 in community (2004-2005)



**Figure 1. Number and rate of school-associated homicides among youth ages 5-18: 1992-2005**



The most recent data from the CDC's School-Associated Violent Death Study (SAVD) are shown in Figure 1. These data are considered preliminary until interviews with law enforcement and school officials are complete. Although the number of homicides to youth ages 5-18 has increased from a low of 11 in 2000-2001 to 21 in 2004/2005, this increase is not statistically significant. Overall, the number of school-associated violent deaths of youth ages 5-18 has declined since the beginning of the study. Nonetheless, the persistence of the problem and the pattern observed in recent years underscores the ongoing need for comprehensive prevention strategies.



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# Why Have a Plan?

## Basic Statistics:

There is ample opportunity for incidents of all sorts to occur.

53 million students X 180 school days =

about 9.5 billion student school days



# School Emergency Management Plans Should...

1. Address the four phases of Emergency Management.



# School Emergency Management Plans Should...

## 2. Take an “all-hazards” approach.

High Base Rate Incidents	Low Base Rate Incidents
Low Impact	High Impact
Bullying	Intruders
Minor Accidents	Weapons / Guns
Fighting (without injury)	Assault with Injury
Automobile Related Issues	Homicides
Drug Possession	Chemical Accidents





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# School Emergency Management Plans Should Be...

3. developed collaboratively with community partners.
4. based upon sound data and information [risk, vulnerability, consequence].
5. practiced on a regular basis.
6. tailored to conditions of individual schools and offices.



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# School Emergency Management Plans Should...

7. include command structure coordinated with first responders [ICS], and align with the National Incident Management System.
  8. address “special needs” students.
  9. address “Emerging Issues” such as Pandemic Flu.
  10. be continually reviewed and updated.
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# Lessons Learned

## 1. Not everything is costly!

- > Use existing data sources to assess risk.
- > Use existing expertise to assess vulnerabilities.
- > Use community partners to expand options for services.
- > Take advantage of what is on credible Web sites.
- > Improve efficiency by collaborating / sharing [building plans, communication needs] with community partners.
- > Use community resources to expand drills.

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# Lessons Learned

## 2. If something could go wrong, it will; anticipate and plan for:

- > Key staff not being present at time of emergency.
- > Communications equipment not working.
- > Evacuation site not being available, or not suitable on day it is needed.
- > Multiple events to happen concurrently.

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# Lessons Learned

3. Everyone has value. Do not exclude anyone in the overall process. Do not forget the school secretary, custodian, teachers aides, office workers, nurses and food service workers.
4. Stuff happens in places other than school buildings. Do not forget buses, offices, alternative schools and school sponsored trips and events.
5. Keep it as simple [but comprehensive] as possible! Flip charts are not comprehensive emergency plans, they are only part of a plan.



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# Lessons Learned

6. Every school has resources that can be used to assist in the development / refinement / improvement of their emergency plan.
- > Photo club to take photos of schools for first responders.
  - > Drama club to assist in drills.
  - > Nurses / SROs that are trained in first aid.
  - > Computer expertise to assist in designing procedures for tracking students, communicating with parents.
  - > Connections with parents and parent groups.



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# Lessons Learned

- 7. It takes a village to develop an effective emergency management plan. If you go it alone you will fail! Every school needs to coordinate with:**
- > All first responders
  - > Health and Mental Health Officials
  - > Other Non-public schools
- 8. It pays to “think outside the box,” be creative in your thinking and planning!**



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# Available Resources

- **U.S. Department of Education's Emergency Planning Web site**
  - [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)
- **Emergency Response and Crisis Management Technical Assistance (TA) Center**
  - <http://ercm.ed.gov/>
- **Emergency Management for Schools Web cast**
  - [www.ConnectLive.com/events/edschoolsafety](http://www.ConnectLive.com/events/edschoolsafety)
- ***Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities***
- ***Emergency Management for Schools Trainings***

