

Helping Schools Prepare for Possible Terrorism

State Team Meeting Guide

Many states already are engaged in a variety of activities to help prepare schools for possible terrorism. State teams ideally include, at a minimum, representatives from the Departments of Education, Health, Emergency Management, and Public Safety and the state homeland security office. The questions below are proposed as a springboard for state team discussions as you work together to:

- identify the strengths and challenges of your state's current terrorism preparedness and response policies and activities for schools;
- improve terrorism preparedness and response policies and activities; and
- build state teams who can collaborate to prepare schools for possible terrorism.

Questions to consider...

- Are education staff partners involved in ongoing state and local terrorism preparedness planning and response efforts?
- Are staff designated from each state agency to work together to improve school preparedness?
 - What will these staff jointly do during the summer break to prepare for the start of school next fall?
 - Are there state agencies not here today that should be part of these efforts? How might you involve them?
- If your state provides schools with a framework for developing school emergency plans, do designated state agency staff have a timeline and plan in place to ensure that the framework can be assessed and revised to address biological, chemical, and radiological events and hoaxes?
 - If your state does not have such a framework, will one be developed?
 - Are steps planned to help individual schools revise their plans to match the updated framework?
 - Do your state public health, public safety, and emergency management agencies have procedures for providing information about the state school emergency plan framework to their local agency counterparts?
- Is your state prepared for emergencies that might affect more than one school? In more than one state?
 - Is the state prepared to coordinate local responses?
 - Can you communicate in an emergency with multiple agencies in multiple jurisdictions?
 - Are sufficient resources available to respond to an event that affects a large number of people or a large geographic area?