

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Safe & Healthy Schools
Emergency Operations Planning Grant
Executive Summary Report**

In October 2014, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction was one of 25 states to be awarded an eighteen month, \$250,000 Emergency Operations Planning (EOP) grant from the US Department of Education. The priority of North Dakota's application was to focus services and training to rural school districts and communities where law enforcement and security response may often not be immediately available and school personnel are required to assume primary responsibility to any variety of emergencies that impact the lives and safety of students.

Working in partnership with the North Dakota Safety Council and the federal and state Departments of Homeland Security, announcements and applications were prepared for schools to apply; scoring criteria identified those eligible and most in need to receive an onsite EOP assessment, follow up, training and additional technical assistance and support. A statewide cadre of consultants (former and current law enforcement and security personnel) were trained using national and state protocols and standards. Consultants were assigned school districts within their geographical area to maximize follow up and support as well as local knowledge of resources and concerns.

During the grant timeline, 32 school districts and 72 buildings were provided an onsite assessment and report. The reports were consistent in areas evaluated and included natural hazards; school management profile; IT systems; building security; personnel and security force profile; building assets and communication; surveillance; transportation; and other relevant factors individual to each district. Additionally, interviews with administration, staff and students were conducted and local and county emergency responders were interviewed where possible.

Each district received an individual building report, which varied from 10-40 pages in length with photos, commendations and options for consideration, which categorized suggestions by policy, practice and equipment/supplies. Two weeks after each report was prepared and sent to

the participating schools, contact was made to address questions and next steps regarding priorities, processes and training (customized in either a four (4) or eight (8) hour format) of administration and community partners as well as school staff.

Technical assistance was provided to all participating school districts; most completed EOP staff and administration training, and all districts are in some level of follow up to address policy, practice and purchase of equipment or make structural changes to enhance safety and security. The US Department of Education and Readiness and Emergency Managements for Schools (REMS) resources were central to any training, technical assistance and resources.

In addition to the onsite assessments given to schools, the Department of Public Instruction, North Dakota Safety Council and federal/state Department of Homeland Security met regularly to increase infrastructure capacity, skill set and knowledge, and create common processes and protocol for school assessments after the grant timeline and funds ended. The sustainment of the process was critical to the state level partners and was communicated to local and county emergency managers, law enforcement and other community partners. During the grant cycle, it was determined to conduct additional onsite assessments to have a specific process for a) daycare and preschool sites; b) parochial /private school settings; c) multi-building K12 districts; and d) large school district. This allows a broader, more comprehensive set of formats to follow as state partners expand the EOP process statewide. Lastly, DPI and NDSC staff provided dozens of statewide presentations and media interviews about the EOP grant and its services as well as general crisis management planning in schools.

Per grant requirements, pre and post district level assessments were completed and recorded into the REMS system; a state level pre and post assessment was also completed. In addition to the executive summary, final fiscal report and required forms, the Department is in the process of updated the website with appropriate resources. Finally, the state level team has met to create the most appropriate sustainment and delivery plan and communicate that to all local districts and partners.