

1. Need for Project

a. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties (SD5) is a growing district of 15,200 students and 80,000 residents in the Midlands area of South Carolina, 10 miles northwest of Columbia. It encompasses a land area of 196 square miles, approximately one-half of which is situated in



each of Lexington and Richland Counties. The school district consists of the northern portion of Lexington County lying north of Lake Murray and the Saluda River, including the towns of Irmo and Chapin, and the northwestern portion of Richland County lying south of the Broad River. The Midlands area is also home to Columbia (MSA = 537,000), the state capital, and Fort Jackson, the largest and most active Initial Entry Training Center in the United States Army.

The school district has 3 attendance areas - Chapin, Dutch Fork, and Irmo – and 20 separate campuses, including 11 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 3 high schools, an alternative middle and high school, and a central district office. The district also operates 3 bus transportation hubs, located on the Irmo High School, Dutch Fork Middle School, and Chapin Middle School campuses. SD5 is growing by 200-300 students each year - nearly all schools are at or above capacity, some by as much as 20%. Seven of its facilities house more than 900 students and its smallest school is over 500 students. In Spring 2004, the school board passed a 10-year building plan that includes additions to 3 schools and the district office, a 12th elementary school to open by August 2006, and a 13th elementary school, 5th middle school, and 4th high school to be completed or planned for by the end of the decade. The district is also

becoming increasingly diverse, with 11 schools at 25% or higher African American, 7 schools at 30% or higher free/reduced lunch, and 3 schools with majority minority populations.

Vulnerability Assessment

Like most public school districts, SD5 has faced threats to school safety from multiple hazards. To better coordinate the district's emergency response and crisis management systems, the district formed a Security Advisory Committee several years ago, made up of district personnel, board members, and **staff** and **parent** representatives from each school, to regularly review existing crisis plans and address emerging safety issues for the district and schools. This committee's work on the district's vulnerability to potential hazards is outlined below:

Coordination of First Responders – Because the district's population is divided roughly 50%-50% between Richland County and Lexington County, district staff must maintain relationships, communication, and coordination with two or more agencies for many services – two county sheriff's departments, two fire/EMS departments, two mental health districts, etc. For some services, such as local government and law enforcement, there are **5** jurisdictions (Columbia, Irmo, Chapin, and the two counties) to coordinate. Although each district facility has designated first responders from one or the other county, several school attendance zones include both counties, leading to potential confusion during a crisis situation.

Lake Murray Dam – The largest earthen dam in the world at the time of construction, the Lake Murray Dam provides hydroelectric power to South Carolina Electric & Gas Company (SCE&G) by holding back Lake Murray's 763 billion gallons of water, covering more than 50,000 acres. A federally-mandated backup dam is being built for earthquake preparedness, which will take another several years to fully complete. If a catastrophic dam failure occurred,

due to an earthquake or terrorist attack, eight schools (6,000+ students) would be flooded within 1.5 hours and would have to evacuate immediately.

Natural Disasters and Severe Weather – According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, South Carolina and other southeastern states experience natural disasters at a rate 2-3 times greater than any other region of the United States, predominantly hurricanes and floods. Hurricanes Hugo and Fran both caused major damage to the area during the past 15 years. The area is also located on an earthquake fault, and a recent 3.7 earthquake caused many small tremors in the area. Severe thunderstorms, hailstorms, tornados and ice storms are common.

Fires – County Emergency Departments reported 139 fires within the school district attendance area in the past 12 months. One of these fires was located in the woods just outside school grounds, and several schools are located within neighborhoods, in isolated rural areas, or near heavily forested areas.

Chemical or Hazardous Materials – 100% of district schools are within five miles of a major truck route. Interstate 26 and U.S. 76/176 bisect the district, Interstate 20 runs along the district's southeastern border, and Interstate 77 is less than 10 miles away. All 3 interstates carry low-level radioactive waste to Barnwell and the Savannah River nuclear facilities. The 1,000-megawatt V.C. Summer Nuclear Station, capable of powering 650,000 homes, is just 18 miles away. A Honeywell plant is located across the street from one elementary school and within 3 miles of 4 school facilities.

Motor Vehicle/Train/Plane Crashes – The proximity of schools to high-traffic thoroughfares and hazardous rural roads increase the odds of a disastrous motor vehicle accident causing school evacuations. According to the S.C. Dept. of Public Safety, 96 people were killed and 7,121 were injured in motor vehicle crashes in Lexington and Richland counties in 2002,

including 49 injuries and 1 fatality on **school buses**. The majority of school facilities are within ¼ mile of a train route, and more than 5,000 students attend school across the street from train tracks. Columbia Metropolitan Airport and several smaller air fields are less than 10 miles away.

Violent Incidents/Threats - SD5 ranks 15th out of 85 districts in South Carolina in the rate of school crime incidents – 3.08 per 100 pupils, well above the state average of 1.86 (source: 2002 Crime Report, S.C. Dept. of Education). While fortunate to have had no school shootings in recent years, SD5 averages 12 incidences of guns or other weapons in school facilities and more than 150 assaults each year. There is also an increasing gang presence in the district, with more than 20 gangs now active in the area according to local law enforcement. In May 2003, the Richland County Sheriff's Department issued an alert and increased law enforcement presence at all county high schools, including Irmo and Dutch Fork High School in SD5, due to a reported threat of gang activity at the end of the school year. In August 2003, a gang member and former Irmo High School student with a history of discipline problems created a potentially disastrous situation at an Irmo-Dutch Fork football game by causing a disturbance and then attempting to grab a sheriff deputy's weapon, thereby resulting in several officers drawing their weapons in a crowd of several hundred youth and adults. Although there have not been recent incidents of an intruder inside school buildings, there have been several occasions at multiple elementary schools of individuals (adult males) lurking on school grounds, looking in windows, indecent exposure, etc. Recently, local news reported an adult male intruding on the grounds of a rural elementary school, offering children candy if they would go into the woods with him. Last year, staff at another elementary school called 911 and spent several anxious hours after a parent called saying her husband was on his way to the school with a gun. As the school district has become more diverse, there is a community perception of increasing racial tensions, both verbal

and physical, among students and between students and staff. District leadership and members of the African American community have formed a district Human Relations Committee and youth-led Unity Committees in the middle and high schools to address this issue.

Bomb Threats – In recent years, the district has experienced waves of bomb threats, mostly at the high schools, requiring several evacuations of school buildings.

Medical Emergencies – Local EMS personnel have responded to **more than 100** calls from SD5 schools in the past 3 years.

Student or Staff Deaths – Over the past 3 years, there have been 18 student and staff deaths, 10 of which were from suicide, homicide, or accidental causes.

Acts of Terror or War – While terrorism is an unlikely threat to the school district itself, the Midlands area is at moderate to high risk. Columbia is home to the governor, legislature, and all state government agencies; Fort Jackson, the nation’s largest military training institution, is nearby; several high-traffic routes for motor vehicles and trains go through the district; and the V.C. Summer Nuclear Station and Lake Murray Dam are natural terrorist targets.

b. The extent to which specific weaknesses in services, infrastructure or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

In its assessment of the school district, the Security Advisory Committee identified several resources and capacities that the district can integrate with or expand through improved emergency response and crisis planning:

- Strategy Seven of SD5’s Strategic Plan is a prevention-focused approach to ensuring safety and security for everyone in the district
- Existing district committee for crisis planning (the Security Advisory Committee), with input from parents and community members in addition to staff

- Individual crisis plans for each school and the district office, adapted from a district-wide plan, which are reviewed annually at each facility. Most principals review crisis procedures when staff return from summer break, for the benefit of new employees.
- District-wide crisis plans for bio-terrorism threats and a Lake Murray Dam break
- All schools and the district have designated Crisis Teams in place. Schools and district staff have access to two-way communication devices (Nextel)
- Annual allocations for security upgrades in the district's capital budget (\$50,000 in 2004-05)
- An assigned, full-time School Resource Officer in all middle and high schools and part-time SROs in the 6 Richland County elementary schools
- Regular inspections of transportation and food service equipment/facilities
- ID systems for students and staff in secondary schools; sign-in procedures in all facilities
- Crisis Team members in each facility form a "Code Blue Team," each member is trained annually in CPR. Special education and counseling staff are also CPR-trained. Certified trainers in-district provide annual training. Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) for heart attack victims are now in place with trained staff in all middle and high schools, funded by local hospitals in 2004.
- Outdoor cameras have been installed on school grounds where needed to combat vandalism
- Federally funded resources, through a 2003 Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) grant, for upcoming safety assessments in selected schools (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design-CPTED); school-based mental health counselors and social workers; threat assessment training for mental health, social work and counseling professionals; and crisis training for staff and community awareness forums by local law enforcement. SS/HS staff negotiated partnership agreements (MOUs) with law enforcement, public health, and

mental health in 2003-04 for personnel, training, and programming, which will be integrated with this proposed project.

- District-wide continuum of prevention programs, K-8, including conflict resolution, violence prevention, parent education, youth development, and gang prevention, funded in part by Safe and Drug-Free Schools
- Initial safety assessments and inspection procedure for district middle schools, through federal School Prevention/Safety Coordinator grant (ended 2004)
- Cooperative relationship with local law enforcement and first responders, including:
 1. Regular inspections of alarm systems and facilities by fire marshals
 2. 2004 District Security Assessment by both sheriff's departments, on behalf of the Security Advisory Committee
 3. **First Responder Emergency Plans** for each school, maintained by SROs: three-ring binders with detailed facility floor plans, phone/electrical systems, photos, hazards, keys, and contact information. Copies are kept at each school, sheriff's department, and county dispatch center.
 4. Disaster drill in 2001 for school shooting and hostage situation, involving district staff, personnel from each school, law enforcement, public safety, public health, local hospitals, National Guard, the media, parents and students

In their work, committee members and district staff have identified several areas of concern, including specific challenges to be addressed by the proposed project. These gaps and weaknesses are organized into the four areas of crisis management: prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery:

Overall Organization

1. School and district crisis plans **do not address** the full range of potential threats. Bioterrorism and dam break evacuation procedures are contained in separate plans for the district, not integrated with school plans.
2. Current crisis plans are **too “standardized”** – plans make little mention of the unique needs of the school in terms of its student/staff population, facilities layout, location, surrounding areas, etc.
3. There is **no district accountability** system to monitor prevention and preparedness procedures in the schools – inspecting facilities and equipment; conducting practice drills; reviewing crisis plans; training staff, parents, and students, etc.
4. There is **no 24-hour security** force or after-hours contact number for the school district. After-hours patrols are limited to 1-2 drive-bys prior to 12:00 a.m.
5. There is **no dedicated staff** or office at the district level for safety and security.

Prevention/Mitigation

1. Crisis plans do not adequately address prevention/mitigation.
2. Only a few schools have received training in conducting school safety assessments.
3. Classroom teachers and other non-counseling staff have not received training in threat assessment and de-escalation strategies.
4. Crisis plans for SCE&G, V.C. Summer Nuclear Station, and local businesses (Honeywell, etc.) are not well coordinated with school or district plans.
5. Older school facilities have challenges controlling access and egress (classrooms opening to the outside, outside hallways, etc.).
6. A uniform challenge protocol needs to be developed and adopted by school and district office staff to address persons on district grounds without proper identification.

Preparedness

1. Staff are often not aware of what actions to take in an emergency. No district policy exists for regular crisis drills at the school level, except for fire and tornado drills. The district office has not held a crisis drill in 3 years.
2. School/district staff and Transportation Office have not practiced evacuation/reunification procedures.
3. Parents and students are not uniformly informed about crisis procedures – depends on the school. Parents and students are not aware of evacuation/reunification procedures.

Response

1. The district does not have a severe weather detection system, leaving schools vulnerable to late or inaccurate information.
2. Crisis plans do not address the unique needs of students with disabilities and students/families who have limited English proficiency.
3. Bus drivers have not practiced evacuation/re-unification drills. Transportation plans for multiple site evacuations (dam flooding) are incomplete.
4. CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) training only provided currently for special education and mental health staff. Teachers and administrators need training in “de-escalation” – how to stay calm and regain control of a disruptive or assaultive child or adult.

Recovery

1. Recovery practices are not included in school or district crisis plans.
2. Recovery procedures are not practiced by staff.
3. Counseling staff have not had the opportunity to receive the same advanced disaster response training as public health social workers in the schools.

While these gaps and weaknesses are significant, SD5 has many local resources in place, including a district-wide focus on safety and security, existing efforts in each of the four crisis planning areas to build from, longstanding relationships with project partners, and a commitment from top leadership to make this project a success and sustain district emergency response and crisis planning efforts well beyond the period of this grant.

2. Significance

a. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change and improvement.

The **goal** of this project is to improve and strengthen the school district's emergency response and crisis management plans, in order to reflect best practices research in the four phases of crisis planning. SD5's Board of Trustees, superintendent, leadership team, Security Advisory Committee, and school staff, as well as both county sheriff's departments, other partner agencies, and the community at large all support the development of **systemic** emergency response and crisis management planning for the school district that addresses identified weaknesses in the four phases of crisis planning: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The proposed project supports each of the 8 plans contained in Strategy Seven of SD5's Five-Year Strategic Plan, which states, "We will ensure safety and security for everyone in the district, with emphasis on prevention." A copy of this strategy is included in the Appendix. District policy, from the top down, has long supported a culture of **shared responsibility** for safety and security issues (hence the Security Advisory Committee), and has intentionally **limited** the use of security equipment in the district except when necessary to protect exterior areas from vandalism during off-hours. Even with limited funding, the school district has been able, through the work of the Security Advisory Committee, to incorporate crisis and safety

issues into the school culture. In their District Security Assessment, both county sheriffs praised the school district (a “**B**” rating) for having a high awareness of security issues among its staff, including: 100% of staff questioned had a copy of their school’s crisis plan; staff could identify security measures for intruders; and classroom doors were locked routinely. In 2004, school principals, district administration, and the school board all endorsed the creation of a district security office for crisis planning and coordination as the **number one priority** for new funding. Through this project, SD5 will develop a comprehensive approach to emergency response and crisis planning, both to address the needs of existing facilities and to develop policies and procedures to integrate newly constructed facilities into district crisis planning resources.

b. The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

This proposed 18-month project for SD5 is a comprehensive plan for: 1. improving and expanding the positive efforts already taking place through district staff and partner agencies; and 2. addressing identified gaps and weaknesses in the four phases of crisis planning, both through grant funding and planning for long-term operating and capital investment. The activities outlined in this proposal are designed to **build capacity** through coordinated crisis planning with stakeholders; customizing individual school plans to meet the unique needs of each facility and its population, including disabled and LEP students; training of staff, parents, and students; conducting practice drills for multiple potential hazards; developing accountability measures for ongoing maintenance, training, and improvement; raising public awareness; and limited technology purchases that can be sustained over time with institutional resources.

Participation of Private Schools – Only private schools for preschool and kindergarten are located in SD5. The district sent certified letters to each private school in SD5 16 days prior

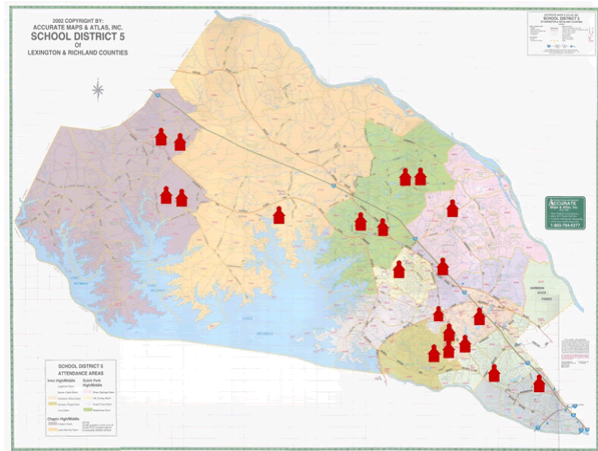
to the submission of this proposal, inviting their staff to participate in the project. Each letter was certified as received, though no private schools responded to the letter.

Maintenance of Effort – SD5 exceeds the Maintenance of Effort requirement.

3. Quality of the Project Design

a. The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

One of the performance indicators for this 18-month project is to institutionalize emergency response and crisis planning procedures for SD5, involving all community stakeholders within and outside the school district. Key to that effort is the expansion of the current Security Advisory Committee (SAC)



SD5 Facility Locations

into the new **Advisory Coordination Team for Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ACT-Team)**. The ACT-Team will include not just staff and parents but also representatives from partner agencies - local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health - local businesses, SCE&G (operators of Lake Murray Dam), area hospitals, local media, and other community members. While the Project Director will lead this committee during the project period, plans are in place to **sustain this position** by establishing a District Security Office. The school funding climate in South Carolina is improving for 2004 – higher state funding per pupil, the first state employee raises in 3 years – and expanding district oversight for security, emergency response and crisis planning is a top priority of both the district administration and the Board of Trustees.

Planning and Training Cycle

The district will adopt a planning cycle that each school, the district office, and the district as a whole will complete by the end of the project period and annually thereafter. The district will also develop a preliminary crisis plan for the elementary school (21st facility) opening in 2006. Each facility will develop its **own plan** based on the unique needs and vulnerabilities of each school. Each facility's Crisis Team will lead the development of their site plan, involving members of their staff, Parent-Teacher Organization and School Improvement Council, students (as appropriate), and local businesses/organizations near the school. The district ACT-Team, led by the Project Director, will develop the district Crisis Plan and direct the planning process through the following:

1. Training district and school staff in the four areas of crisis planning
2. Setting parameters for Crisis Plans, incorporating all potential hazards; assessment of internal and external threats; including needs of disabled and ESOL students; communicating with stakeholders; and addressing prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
3. Incorporate lessons learned from crisis drills and real-life situations to improve the district's capacity to respond to emergencies.

In order to effectively lead this process, ACT-Team leaders, namely the Project Director and representatives from the school district and partner agencies, will attend FEMA's **Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools** course, if offered, or similar training in 2004-05.

Crisis Plans will be distributed to all staff, both in written and flip-chart form, as well as to all first responder agencies (law enforcement, fire, EMS) for that site, local businesses/organizations, and the ACT-Team.

Training of Staff, Students, and Parents in Emergency Response

All the beautifully written, illustrated plans in the world will have no effect if people do not have the skills to function effectively during a crisis. In nearly all crisis situations, **people**, not fancy equipment, have the power to prevent situations from worsening or happening altogether, whereas ineffective or incorrect action can mean disaster. The SD5 training model mirrors the four phases of crisis planning: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Emergency Response Training for Staff, Parents, and Students – Staff need to know their role in handling a crisis situation at their facility. Crisis Teams in each school and the district office will train staff in their buildings about their school’s policies and procedures for crisis prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Under the guidance and support of the Project Director, SROs, project staff, and other community partners will help lead the training, and mental health professionals will guide staff through how to provide support for children and colleagues during traumatic events, grieving, and bereavement. The ACT-Team and Project Director will develop crisis education materials for schools to customize and distribute to **parents** through school newsletters, web sites, and PTO meetings. Following training, staff and students will participate in practice drills (see *Preparedness*), which will include a **prescribed curriculum for students** before and after the drill that staff will practice during in-service training. Teachers, administrators, and support staff at the school and district level will also be trained in research-based models for crisis prevention (see *Prevention/Mitigation*).

b. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up to date knowledge from research and effective practice.

Best Practices Research – The Project Director and ACT-Team will incorporate several research sources into the development of SD5’s emergency response and crisis plans, including: U.S. Department of Education’s *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*; U.S. Secret Service’s *Threat Assessment Guide*; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

and Firearms' *Bomb Threat Response* interactive planning guide; U.S. Department of Justice's *A Model for School-based Crisis Preparedness and Response*; and others.

Prevention/Mitigation Activities

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) – Trainers from the National Institute of Crime Prevention will train the ACT-Team and Crisis Team members from each school and district office in CPTED, a nationally-recognized prevention model for schools, municipalities, and businesses based on the theory that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime and an improvement in the quality of life. The CPTED philosophy is crime prevention through natural means - how natural access control and natural surveillance decrease the opportunity for crime. Federal (SS/HS) funds are paying for the initial 3-day training in Fall 2004, which will enable participants to go back to their facilities and incorporate CPTED concepts into their facility crisis plans. Three high-risk schools (Harbison West Elementary, Irmo Middle, and Irmo High) will continue to work with CPTED consultants during 2004-05 to develop their school plans.

Threat Assessment – Another collaboration between the district's SS/HS and Crisis Planning initiatives will be joint training in Threat Assessment and referral. Research of both youth and adult behavior demonstrates that nearly 100% of the time, catastrophic incidents of violence (ex. school shootings) are preceded by weeks, often months, of escalating behaviors. Additionally, staff can intervene early with students abusing alcohol or drugs or becoming involved with gangs, if they have the skills to interpret warning signs. Joint sponsorship of training activities by this project and SS/HS will allow staff outside of counseling and School Crisis Teams to attend Threat Assessment training by public health and law enforcement partners, beginning in Fall 2004. Additionally, law enforcement will collaborate with District

staff to hold **Community Forums** in the district's 3 attendance areas throughout the project period, to teach families how to keep their schools and community safe from gangs and violence.

Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) - The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program, developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and used commonly by special education teachers, not only teaches staff how to respond effectively to the warning signs that someone is beginning to lose control, but also addresses how staff can deal with their own stress, anxieties and emotions when confronted with challenging situations. Two district staff are certified CPI trainers, and will train Crisis Team members and other interested staff during in-service time.

Capital Plan for Crisis Mitigation – Recommendations from school Crisis Teams, ACT-Team, and law enforcement regarding facilities needs will be prioritized by the Project Director and district Property Services Coordinator for the school district's capital budget plan.

Uniform Challenge Protocol – The ACT-Team will develop standard procedures for all schools and the district office for challenging persons without proper identification. Each building entrance will display requirements for wearing district/school IDs or obtaining a Visitor's badge. Staff will be trained during in-service time.

Coordination with Area Crisis Plans – The Project Director will obtain crisis plans from local businesses located near district facilities (ex. Honeywell), for Crisis Teams to coordinate with their individual plans.

Safety Inspection Teams – The Project Director will coordinate 10 volunteer teams of district staff, law enforcement, public safety, and parents to conduct unannounced inspections of district facilities. Each Inspection Team will inspect 2 facilities, twice annually to check safety and security measures (locked exterior and classroom doors, uniform ID check, Crisis Toolbox in place in central location and in individual classrooms, students adequately supervised).

Nighttime Facility Inspections – The Project Director will inspect district facilities twice annually after-hours to check exterior security/lighting deficiencies, particularly in parking lots.

Preparedness

First Responder “Open Houses” – Though local law enforcement and fire marshals know school facilities well, EMS and other first responders are not as familiar with district facilities. SROs will host open houses for first responders to tour the facility; note locations of command and control centers, evacuation routes and special needs populations; and meet the facility Crisis Team.

Crisis Toolkits – The ACT-Team will standardize the contents of each site’s Crisis Toolkit to include the facility Crisis Plan, First Responder Emergency Plan, First Aid/CPR materials, communication equipment, etc. Each classroom will have a toolkit as well, for teachers to keep their copy of the crisis plan; laminated flip-charts containing evacuation routes, lock-down procedures, and checklist for tracking students; first aid supplies; and tape/towels for sealing vents, doors, and windows.

Accountability – The Project Director will develop district-wide policies and procedures for conducting and reporting regular crisis prevention and preparedness activities, including deadlines for designating Crisis Team members, updating Crisis Plans, conducting site drills, inspecting facilities and equipment, staff training, and parent/student communication. District level crisis planning activities will be included in the district calendar sent to all employees.

Special Needs Evacuation/Lock-down – Each school’s improved Crisis Plan will include procedures for assisting with special needs populations. Although each school’s population contains a diverse group of children with special needs, there are district-wide programs housed at specific schools for Autism, Orthopedically Disabled, Emotionally Disabled, Preschool

Children with Disabilities, etc. First responders also need to know which schools house large numbers of students with physical limitations – wheelchairs, visual/hearing impairment, etc. In a crisis situation, special education teachers will need extra assistance from staff moving students to safety. Also, one staff person, likely the School Nurse, needs to be responsible for getting all critical medications to teachers in an evacuation or lock-down situation.

Practice Drills – The Project Director and ACT-Team will develop a schedule for practice drills that includes both evacuation and lockdown procedures, with the first drill cycle to be completed by the end of the 18-month project period. The district will hold at least one crisis drill annually that involves law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health.

Parent Communications – The ACT-Team and Project Director will develop crisis education materials for schools to customize and distribute to **parents** through school newsletters, web sites, and PTO meetings. Parents of students with disabilities will receive information on crisis procedures during annual IEP meetings.

Response

Roles and Responsibilities – Current plans call for 3-4 staff members to serve on Crisis Teams. The Project Director will expand the roles and responsibilities of Crisis Team members at each facility, based on recommended job descriptions from the Department of Justice's *School Crisis Response Initiative*, which cover leadership, internal and external communications, media, crowd management, and counseling services. Additionally, school Crisis Teams will designate staff members to assist special education teachers in the event of an evacuation or lock-down.

Severe Weather Response – SD5 will purchase two on-line weather surveillance systems, one for the central office and one for the rural Chapin area, to provide accurate satellite information on impending weather conditions – thunderstorms, tornados, etc.

Command Center Interpreters – The Project Director will create a phone tree of school staff and/or community volunteers who speak Spanish and other common languages in the district to staff the Command and Control Center and respond to parent/community concerns.

Recovery

Counseling Services – Each Crisis Team will have someone with mental health expertise to be responsible for determining the extent of counseling services needed in a crisis, mobilizing resources from other schools and the community, and overseeing the mental health services provided to students, staff, and parents.

Recovery Teams – The Project Director will work with SS/HS staff and others to develop Recovery Teams, who will respond to situations at their designated schools and district office. School social workers, school-based mental health counselors, guidance staff, and school psychologists from throughout the district will be part of this effort, as well as personnel and resources from the public health district and public mental health.

Recovery Training - School social workers are currently undergoing 2 years of advanced disaster response training through public health partners, including K-FLASH (Kids Frontline Assistance and Support for Healing), a model for identifying post-traumatic stress in children. Through this project, school mental health counselors, school counselors, and school psychologists will receive K-FLASH training as well.

c. The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar efforts, and with other appropriate community, state, and federal resources.

Coordination with Homeland Security Plan – Project planners contacted the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the state contact for South Carolina’s Homeland Security Plan. SD5’s goal and performance indicators for this proposal coordinate with the state plan’s objective “to develop and implement emergency operations planning and risk mitigation

for school infrastructure, operations, and other support activities.” The appendix includes a letter of support from SLED outlining coordination with the state Homeland Security Plan.

Coordination with Partner Resources – This project is coordinated with local efforts of both the school district and project partners. Within SD5, the project links with existing school and district crisis planning efforts, local operating and capital expenditures for safety and security, and SS/HS programs. Local law enforcement will coordinate this project with its annual review of school emergency plans by School Resource Officers and law enforcement training responsibilities for the SS/HS project. The local public health and mental health agency have Memorandums of Understanding with SD5 to provide social workers and mental health counselors in the schools for student services and staff training, and will incorporate these resources into the proposed project. Required partners from both counties, Irmo, and Chapin have agreed to participate in the project, as evidenced by the attached Partner Agreement.

4. Quality of the Project Evaluation

a. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be used to measure progress toward the following performance indicators:

1. By March 2006, 100% of the district’s 21 facilities (19 current schools, 1 school under construction, district office) and the district will complete emergency response plans that address an increased number of hazards as compared to their baseline plan (GRPA); include all four phases of crisis planning; base their plans on an assessment of the unique vulnerabilities of their facility and population; and address the needs of special populations, included disabled and LEP students.

2. By March 2006, at least 15 of 20 district facilities (75%) will demonstrate improved response time and quality of response to practice drills and simulated crises.
3. By March 2006, SD5 and community partners in local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health will sign a revised Partnership Agreement committing resources to the sustainability and continuous improvement of school and district emergency response plans.

SD5 will contract with an Independent Evaluator, someone outside the school district with significant experience in the area of emergency preparedness and crisis response, to conduct the project's process and outcome evaluation. Approximately 7% of the attached budget is committed to evaluation services. The process evaluation will address questions such as: 1. Were program procedures carried out with fidelity to the management plan in a timely fashion? 2. Were qualified staff hired and properly trained and oriented to the project? 3. Were the major project strategies effective in their day-to-day operations? An ongoing analysis of all program components will enable the Project Director and ACT-Team to make timely modifications in any component that is not functioning in an adequate capacity. *Process indicators* will include participant surveys/interviews, training evaluations, checklists, and daily/weekly reports by the Project Director. Adherence to the Project Timeline for hiring, training, and conducting activities will be closely monitored. *Outcome indicators* will include a review of all Crisis Plans, response time logs, de-briefing sessions following crisis drills, and the revised Partnership Agreement. The Independent Evaluator will attend ACT-Team meetings and present quarterly reports on process and outcome indicators.

5. Quality of the Management Plan

a. How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

Key to the success of this project will be the Advisory Coordination Team for Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ACT-Team), an outgrowth of the district's current Security Advisory Committee. The ACT-Team will meet monthly during the first few months of the project, bi-monthly for the remainder of the project period, and semi-annually thereafter to inform members on the progress of crisis planning efforts, solicit input from a diversity of perspectives on strengthening crisis planning, and coordinating the involvement of community partners. The ACT-Team membership will include:

- SD5: Project Director, district representatives from Student Services, Transportation, Food Services, Instructional Services, Special Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Safe Schools/Healthy Students; one administrator per school; one SIC member (teacher or parent) per school; and at least one school board member
- Independent Evaluator
- Local Government: Representatives from Irmo, Chapin, and county councils
- Law Enforcement: Representatives from Lexington County Sheriff's Department, Richland County Sheriff's Department, Columbia Police, Irmo Police, and Chapin Police
- Public Safety: Representatives from both counties' Emergency Management Services
- Public Health: Representative from Palmetto Public Health District, Lead School Social Worker for SD5, representatives from Lexington Medical Center, Palmetto Health Alliance
- Mental Health: Representative from Lexington Community Mental Health, school mental health counselor(s) in SD5

- Businesses: Representatives from SCE&G, Honeywell, Irmo Chamber of Commerce
- Organizations: Representatives from Irmo Chapin Recreation, Community Roundtable

Each required partner (local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health) as well as other ACT-Team members will be involved in the development of school and district crisis plans, and will receive a copy of the final plan and subsequent revised plans. Representatives from the required partner agencies have signed the attached Partnership Agreement, agreeing to collaborate with SD5 on the following: 1. Reviewing current plans and procedures; 2. Advising the school system and School Board on ways to broaden and improve its plans; 3. Appointing of a representative to participate on the SD5 Advisory Coordination Team for Emergency Response and Crisis Management; 4. Participating in training programs to improve crisis management; 5. Assisting in training of district personnel, school personnel, students, and parents; and 6. Participating in any tests or drills where appropriate.

b. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

SD5 will hire a full-time Project Director for the 18-month project period to oversee all emergency response and crisis planning for the school district. It is anticipated that this position will be sustained through local funds as the district's Office of Safety and Security. The person hired for this position will have at least an undergraduate degree in education, public safety, or related field and significant experience with developing and administering safety and security plans, preferably in an education setting. This position will report to the Supervisor of Student Services for the district. SD5 will provide office space, fax/copier, phone, Internet, and support staff services through local and SS/HS funds.

Project Timeline (September 2004 – April 2006)

Process Objective	Who	By
Train school and district Crisis Teams, counseling/social work staff in Threat Assessment	SS/HS, law enforcement	9/04
Announce grant award to local media, SD5 stakeholders	SD5 PR Office	9/04
Train school and district Crisis Teams in CPTED	SS/HS, CPTED trainers	10/04
Recruit ACT-Team members, hold initial meeting	Supervisor of Student Services (SSS)	10/04
Recruit and hire Project Director (PD)	Superintendent, SSS	10/04
Attend FEMA Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools course	PD, SSS, SD5 reps, partner reps (5 people)	1 st avail.
Attend Project Director meeting, 2 other grantee meetings in Washington, DC	PD, SSS	As scheduled
Schedule, develop agendas for ACT-Team meetings	PD	11/04-4/06
Select Independent Evaluator	PD, ACT-Team	12/04
Train staff in each school in Threat Assessment	School counseling staff, SROs	12/04
Train staff in each school in Emergency Response Training	SROs, mental health, Crisis Teams	12/04, 8/05
Install on-line weather surveillance systems; train staff to monitor system	PD, vendor	12/04
Complete nighttime inspections of SD5 facilities	PD	12/04, 5/05, 12/05, 3/06
Train administrators, counselors, special education teachers, and teachers in Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) de-escalation training on district in-service days	CPI trainers	1/05, 3/05, 6/05, 10/05, 1/06, 3/06
Develop district crisis education materials for parents	PD, ACT-Team	1/05
Recruit and coordinate 10 Safety Inspection Teams to inspect district facilities 2x/year	PD	2/05, 12/05, 3/06

Develop crisis drill pre- and post- curriculum for elementary, middle, and high school students	PD, ACT-Team	3/05
Crisis Teams present their draft Crisis Plans to ACT-Team	Crisis Teams	3/05
Develop phone tree of interpreters for crisis response	PD	3/05
Train mental health counselors, school counselors, school psychologists in disaster response and recovery (K-FLASH)	Public health, PD	3/05
Hold Open Houses at each district facility for first responders	Crisis Teams, PD, ACT-Team	3/05, 9/05
Develop Crisis Toolkits for schools, district office	PD, ACT-Team	5/05
District Crisis Plan and Uniform Challenge Protocol to SD5 admin., Board of Trustees	PD, ACT-Team	5/05
Hold timed evacuation and lockdown drills at each school	Crisis Teams, PD	8/05, 3/06
Print and distribute Crisis Plans, flip-charts to staff, partner agencies	PD	8/05
Develop and implement district policies/procedures for reporting crisis prevention and preparedness; train Crisis Teams in procedures	PD, ACT-Team	8/05
Train school staff in revised Crisis Plans, Uniform Challenge Protocol, including crisis response procedures for disabled students in IEPs	PD, Crisis Teams, Special Ed.	10/05
Hold timed district evacuation/reunification drill	PD, ACT-Team	12/05
Revise school and district Crisis Plans	Crisis Teams, ACT-Team	2/06
Develop and sign new Partnership Agreement for sustaining crisis planning in SD5	ACT-Team	3/06
Submit required reports to USDOE	PD	As directed