Introduction

Incident Response Team
– Proactive Training

Theater Shooting
– Training Implementation
  – Main Messages
  – Phases 1-5
  – Videos

Summary
THEATER SHOOTING
JULY 20, 2012

• **Main Messages**

• **Phase 1**  
  Immediate Response:  
  July 20-July 23

• **Phase 2**  
  Preparation for School:  
  July 23-Aug. 6

• **Phase 3**  
  School Start:  
  Aug. 6-Nov. 2

• **Phase 4**  
  Ongoing Support:  
  Nov. 2-Ongoing

• **Phase 5**  
  Commemoration:  
  Feb. 4-May 31

• **Videos**

7/20 Video Clip
• Our schools are safe.
• We have a plan.
• You are not alone.
• We care.
PHASE 1
IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

- Gateway H.S. - victim/witness and family gathering site
- Aurora Central H.S. - evacuees site
- Hinkley H.S. and Rangeview H.S - Disaster and Resource Recovery sites
- Gateway H.S. closed to prep registration
- Aurora Central H.S. closed the evacuees
- Rangeview H.S. and Hinkley H.S closed Disaster Recovery Centers
  ✓50 plus people served over 3 days

Gateway Vigil Video
PHASE 2
PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL START

- City of Aurora collaboration ([Video](#))
- Funding mechanism
- Memorial services and funerals
- New Disaster & Recovery website
- Personal outreach to all APS-related staff, students and community members
- Psychologists/counselors on call
- Parent meetings
PHASE 2
PREPARATION CONTINUED...

• **Communications plan** included:
  - Email
  - Connect-Ed calls
  - Future recognitions repository
  - Secretary Duncan podcast
  - Media response
  - Faith-based groups outreach

• Resource list of all agencies
• Outreach to Paris Elementary families
• Pro-active substance abuse reduction
• Suicide prevention plan

[View the APS Disaster Recovery Website](#)
PHASE 3
SCHOOL START

- Back to School (Video)
- Recovery coordinator
- Psychologists/counselors
- Substitute teachers in all schools
- Crisis management committee
- Grade-specific talking points
- Enhanced security around APS schools
- Additional community meetings
"We know that symptoms of trauma can emerge over time for students and staff members."

- Dr. David Schonfeld
  National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement

(Adjustment Over Time in Crisis)

APS Action Plan
Prevention, Initial Response, Recovery
PHASE 4
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

• Conduct a needs assessment with partners
  • Aurora Mental Health, Judi’s House, Colorado School Safety Resource Center, Colorado Organization for Victims Assistance and APD/Victim Service Unit

• Assess needs of principals, staff, students and families

• Develop resources to address these needs
  • Resource Workshops, Recurring Professional Development

• Focus on prevention
  • Use RtI to ensure emotional needs of students are identified
  • Connect students to appropriate services for support
PHASE 4
SIX MONTHS LATER

- Adjustment problems nearly universal
  - **Adjustment Over Time in Crisis**
  - **Nuggets Visit Gateway H.S. Video**
- Data from 9/11 survey of New York City Public Schools students:
  - 87% reported PTSD symptom 6 months later
    - 76% often thinking about attack
    - 45% trying to avoid thinking or talking about it
    - 25% harder to keep mind on things
    - 24% problems sleeping
    - 17% nightmares
    - 18% stopped going to places or doing things that reminded them of 9/11
Process of honoring and preserving the memory of what is important to us that has been lost (AJ Boik Commemoration video)
Not remembering the event, but rather helping children identify and share those things that they lost so that we can preserve the memories and whenever possible, restore what is most important
Need to engage children in this process
PHASE 5
BENEFITS OF COMMEMORATION

• Memorial activities help children express and cope with feelings
• By planning and taking part in a memorial event, children can exercise some control
• What you plan is far less important than how
• Children must be involved actively in planning
• The events should be relevant
A memorial planned by adults for children is more likely to be helpful to the adults.

Thoughtful memorial responses often rely on symbolic activities.
PHASE 5
ANTICIPATING STUDENT STRESS

• Adults often worry that memorial events and discussions will upset students or themselves, but it is the crisis events themselves that were upsetting.

• Notify families prior to events or planning efforts.

• For children with personal losses, speak prior to start of discussions; set up way to communicate concerns privately and make arrangements so children can leave on own initiative.

• Any discussions should be conducted as if there were students who were directly affected.
PHASE 5
HONOR CHILDREN & ADULT NEEDS

• Children not as directly impacted may not be interested in ongoing attention or resent having school experience defined by crisis

• Disinterest may be related to sense there is nothing they can do to change events or impact

• The goal of commemoration is to remember what was lost and what we wish to preserve, rather than remember the moment or method of loss – minimize traumatic reminders
PHASE 5
IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE

• Recognize it is distressing to be with children who are in distress.

• It’s critical staff find ways to have their own personal needs met and appreciate and address impact of supporting children who are grieving or traumatized.

• Create a culture where:
  – it is ok to be upset.
  – members normalize asking for help and model willingness to accept assistance.
SUMMARY

- Planning & Preparation
- Tabletop & Full Annual Exercise
- IRT Recurring Meetings
- Lessons Learned Debriefing
THANK YOU
ZONAR SAMPLE

Welcome, twicks (aur0360)

User Settings | Support | Feedback | Logout

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Location

Select to view the last recorded location of up to 5 assets, or leave the form blank to view all assets.

Address, city or ZIP:

Search

Generate Report

Map Mode: Short Medium Tall Full

Location Results
ESF5 Emergency Management/Incident Commander

This is the only position that must be filled at all times. Anthony Sturges is the designated Incident Commander. John Barry and William Stuart will be primary/backup as directed by the Superintendent.

Immediately establish contact via Telecom and Webinar with agencies/districts involved—establish contact with APD, AFD and on site APS Liaison Director on the scene. If this is an exercise, preface all comments on phones as “This is an exercise.”

1. Monitor roll call to ensure correct IRT participants are in attendance.
2. Confirm site administrator is calling into the teleconference using their cell phone.
3. Confirm participation for the teleconference and identify participants.
4. Using GIS identify APS facilities in 1, 2 or 3 miles of the incident.
5. Utilize wall maps in the EOC to determine perimeter within one, three or five mile radius of the incident location.
6. Establish objectives/outcomes.
7. Refer to Incident Flowchart Procedures and Evacuation and Reunification Flowchart. Fill out large board with big picture information to date.
8. Identify potentially impacted staff and students and consider facility lockdowns for affected sites.
10. Get updated information from local authorities and Liaison Director who is at the scene.
## INCIDENT LOG SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description – Sequence of Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 am</td>
<td>John Barry – let’s recap what has happened. Tudy please start Tudy Wicks – I received a call around 1:30 am that at the theater at the mall a man dressed in black went into the Batman movie and started shooting. Over 100 people are witnesses went to Gateway. Many Gateway students were transported to Gateway to be interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:36</td>
<td>JB – remember that information is still coming in. There are 12 confirmed dead. The gunman went into theater 9 and started shooting. Apparently bullets went through the walls into theater 8. We opened the high school. The board has been notified. Bill Hedges was called. Bill went into Gateway to help and the SRO. It took awhile to cool down the school. Red Cross was on the scene to help. The gym has been used as well as staff offices for debriefs. Parents also arrived. Bill Hedges – three confirmed victims. Very popular senior graduate, minor injury, graduating senior, don’t know extent of the injury, not life threatening. has been treated and released. is at Childrens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:41</td>
<td>JB – Do we have any information regarding other students from other schools. BH – we have heard rumors but nothing specific. We have family groups here. JB – A Connect Ed message went out that all activities at Gateway have been cancelled. JB – Does anyone have any other information. The first duty we have is with the families. There have been conflicting reports of a second gunman. BH – We have reports of a former employee, who was at the theater. is a VistaPeak employee. The person who was with was seriously injured. Julie Mileham – The news media is reporting 38 injured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Incident Response Team Brief
Theater Shooting
Schools/Buildings Involved

• 7/20/12
  • Shooting took place at Century 16 theater
  • Gateway HS was used to question parties involved
  • Suspects house is located at 17th and Peoria
  • Paris Elementary evacuated and surrounding homes
    — Red Cross using ACHS as a shelter for the people affected

• 7/21/12
  • RHS and HHS are sites that will be used for counselors
    this Saturday (7/21/12) 9 AM – 4 PM

PACESetters!!
CAMERAS SAMPLE
COMCAST RECORDING SAMPLE
APS responds to the movie theater tragedy. Visit the Disaster Recovery & Resources website.

Disaster Recovery

APS Continues Proactive Response to Movie Theater Tragedy

APS Cares: Community Gathering – Responding to Challenging and Traumatic Events

Aurora Public Schools is hosting two community meetings related to the theater tragedy in collaboration with Aurora Mental Health and Children's Hospital Colorado. The goal of these meetings is to follow up with our families and staff about our disaster recovery efforts and to learn about any additional needs they may have.

We invite you to join us at one of the meetings which will be held on:

- Monday, Sept. 17 at 4:30 p.m.
- Monday, Sept. 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Both meetings will be held at the APS Professional Learning and Conference Center, located at 15771 E. 1st Ave., Aurora, CO 80011.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan Addresses Movie Theater Tragedy
COMMUNICATION PLAN – PHASE I

PHASE I - July 20 – July 23
- Included more than 25 messages and numerous media inquiries

Phase I included the preliminary response after the shooting, such as the opening of Gateway High School to the Aurora Police Department so officers could meet with witnesses. In addition, families from Paris Elementary School were impacted by the tragedy, including those who were evacuated from their homes because of their proximity to the suspect's apartment. The communication plan included the following:

- Communication to affected staff and parents
  - Automated calls to Gateway parents and staff announcing closure and schedule changes
  - Automated calls to APS families evacuated from buildings near Paris Elementary advising them of resource and shelter information
  - Automated calls to Paris families advising them of resource information and counseling services

- Communication to parents
  - Automated calls to APS families with resource information

- Communication to staff
  - Email to all staff with resource information
  - Regular updates to the APS Board of Education

- Communication via website, media and social media
  - Resource information posted on the APS website and updated regularly
  - Resource information sent out to key communicators
  - Disaster Recovery Center information posted on APS website and updated regularly
  - News releases announcing Disaster Recovery centers
  - Numerous local, national and international media responses about APS involvement
  - Talking points provided to Aurora Chief of Police related to the Disaster Recovery centers to use during news conferences
  - Resource and Disaster Recovery Center information posted on Facebook and Twitter and updated regularly
  - Thank you notes sent to local media

View Phase II
COMMUNICATION PLAN – PHASE II

PHASE II – July 24 – August 7

- Included more than 20 messages and numerous media inquiries

Phase II was focused on supporting our families and staff and preparing for the new school year. APS staff created a website of resources to help anyone in need. Staff worked closely with the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement to develop a plan for the first day of school with the goal of reassuring students they are safe, that we care, and to inform them that resources are available to help, if needed. As part of Phase II, APS held a news conference, hosted a parent meeting, showed a staff webinar and develop resources for teachers. The communication plan included the following:

- Automated calls to parents with information about resources including the Disaster Recovery website
- All-staff email with Disaster Recovery website and resource information
- Disaster recovery plans discussion at principal’s meeting
- School marquee messages: “Standing with the Aurora Community”
- News release announcing news briefing and special parent meeting
- Automated calls to parents announcing special parent meeting
- Message to key communicators about news briefing and special parent meeting
- Message about news briefing and special parent meeting posted on the APS website
- Message about news briefing and special parent meeting posted on Facebook and Twitter
- Special message about Disaster Recovery and Resources in the annual Back-to-School webinar
- Automated calls to parents regarding opting their students out of the first day of school discussion
- Discussion points for teachers to present to students on the first day of school
- Regular updates to the Disaster Recovery and Resources website
- Email to staff with information about the mental health plan for schools
PHASE III - August 8 – November 1

• Included more than 15 messages and numerous media inquiries

When school started on August 7 and 9, APS staff continued to be proactive and to monitor students’ responses to the shooting and anything else that might affect their learning. There were counselors at all secondary schools and counselors on call at elementary schools. During Phase III, APS hosted community meetings related to the theater tragedy in collaboration with Aurora Mental Health and Children’s Hospital Colorado. The communication plan included the following:

• Podcast message to student and staff from United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
• Automated calls to all APS families
• Email invitations to mental health partners and elected officials
• All-staff email announcing the meetings
• Information about the meetings posted on the APS website
• Information about the meetings posted on Facebook and Twitter
• E-mail invitations to key communicators
• Announcement on the back page of the Aurora Sentinel
• Announcement on the student information system portal
• Announcement at principal meeting
• Announcement on local media event calendars
• Personal calls from principals to families who were impacted by the tragedy to offer resources and invite them to the community meeting.
• Discussion pointed provided Community of Faith leaders
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ADJUSTMENT OVER TIME IN CRISIS

A = baseline functioning  
B = event  
C = vulnerable state  
D = usual coping mechanisms fail  
E = helplessness, hopelessness  
F = improved functioning  
G = continued impairment  
H = return to baseline  
I = post-traumatic growth
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SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS AT ALL SCHOOLS

Tuesday & Wednesday (Aug. 7 & 8)
- **K-8s:** 1 sub each
- **Middle Schools:** 2 subs each
- **High Schools:** 3 subs each

Thursday & Friday (Aug. 9 & 10)
- **Elementary Schools:** 2 subs each
- **K-8s:** 2 subs each
VIDEOS

• Super Bowl Feature
• Gateway Vigil
• Back to School Plan
• City Partnership