ANNEX-
Student / Parent-Guardian Reunification

I.   AUTHORITY

Reference the appropriate section of the school and/or District policy and Emergency Operations Plans.

II.   PURPOSE & DEFINITION

The process used to assure the return of the students in your care to an authorized adult in any unusual circumstance while providing positive documentation of that action.

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III.   SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

Initiating Conditions: Any situation where school officials determine that students would be safer in the care and control of their parents/guardians. Examples include utility outage, flooding, seismic activity, severe weather, acts of violence, terrorist activity or civil disobedience, or other hazards. Any abnormal or unexpected release of students will require elements of reunification.

Assumptions

➢ Reunification of students with an authorized individual is the responsibility of the school district/charter governing board and may be delegated to school district administrators.

➢ The process can be complex and will take time.

➢ Prior planning and coordination with first responders is critical to success.

➢ Documentation of each student's reunification with an authorized person is a requirement. The starting assumption is that location and status of all students is unknown.

➢ The more unusual or traumatic the triggering event the greater the impact.

➢ There may be individuals involved in the process (students and parents) with functional needs requiring accommodation. (e.g., translation, accessibility considerations)

➢ A school staff traumatized by an incident, will need outside support to accomplish an effective reunification.

➢ Reunification may be required for groups of students regardless of their location. (e.g., field trips, busses, etc.)

➢ Safety considerations may require the reunification process to take place at an offsite location. Therefore, offsite relocation sites should be pre-identified.

➢ Other schools in the district will be operationally affected by reunification at any school in the district.

➢ Some events could require reunification operations at some or all district schools at the same time.

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- Personnel and equipment from outside sources may be needed more quickly than they are available.

- The entire school community will be anxious and concerned.

- Effective communications with be critical.

- Some or all normal communications tools may not be available, including network access to student information systems.

- There will be misinformation and rumor regarding the incident and process.

- There may be injuries or fatalities incurred by students or staff.

- Mental health support may be required.

- Some students may self-evacuate during the initiating incident.

- Some parents may refuse to cooperate with the student/parent reunification process.

- Unauthorized individuals may try to pick up students.

- Some students may not have an immediately available guardian or emergency contact and will require supervision until reunified.

- Several authorized individuals could arrive at different times to pick up the same student.

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IV.	CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

General:

A. Student/parent reunification is the means for safe, orderly, and documented reunion of students and families in the event of an emergency evacuation or school closing. The complexity of the reunification event is determined by two primary factors: The nature of the triggering event (magnitude, intensity, speed of onset, duration, and available resources) and characteristics of the school (student population, school community demographics, staff capacity, facility, location, and community expectations). These factors will determine the complexity of both operational planning and execution.

B. *[District/School]* must be prepared to conduct both small-scale and large-scale reunification operations at all times of the day, with a full school student population or with small groups of students and at both the school and offsite locations.

C. *[District/School]* will use the Incident Command System (ICS) as the organizational framework for Student/Parent Reunification organizational planning and operational control. Activation of any Reunification Function will be determined by the Incident Commander.

D. One person may fulfil several functions, or several individuals may be needed to accomplish one function depending on the size of the student body and/or the nature of the triggering event.

E. Depending on the complexity and impact of the incident ICS protocol may indicate separation of reunification into the following sections: Exterior Operations, Interior Operations, and Security Operations determined by the Reunification Lead/Incident Commander.

F. *[District/School]* will use a two-gate system with a "Request Gate, "Secure Student Holding Area", and "Release Gate".

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G. Operational Structure Outline

a. Interior Operations

i. Identify crowd control/security needs:
1. Coordinate with Security Operations (if activated) to request staffing for high-conflict areas.

ii. Request Gate Operations:
1. Request Desk:
   a. Parent/Guardian requests student.
   b. Verify identity and authorization of the parent/guardian.
      i. Move unusual issues to the exceptions desk.
   c. Verify the student's location and status.
      i. Parents/guardians of missing/injured students routed to the notification desk.
      ii. Request students from the Secure Student Holding Area.
   d. Route the parent to the Release Gate.
   e. Complete and file documentation.
2. Exceptions Desk:
   a. Staffed by a school/district official w/decision making authority.
   b. Process and authorize any unusual circumstances from the request desk.
   c. Return documentation to the Request Desk.
3. Student Accountability Desk:
   a. Account for all students in the secure holding area.
   b. Identify and locate students who are absent, injured, missing or transported by responders.
   c. Report student status to the request desk and the notification desk.
4. Notification Desk/Area:
   a. Notify parents/guardian of missing, injured, or deceased students.
   b. Staffed by a School/District official and mental health support staff.
   c. Follow SOP for student injury or death notification.

iii. Secure Student Holding Operations:

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1. Student Supervision
   a. Provide general supervision and control of students in the Secure Student Holding Area.
   b. Maintain classroom unit and accountability if possible.
   c. Provide access and location for Law Enforcement to interview witnesses as required by the incident.
2. Student care/support
   a. Provide bathroom access.
   b. Provide snacks and drinks.
   c. Provide appropriate entertainment (as needed/appropriate)
   d. Provide general reassurance to anxious students. (school staff)
   e. Provide specific support for traumatized students. (mental health providers)
3. Student Movement
   a. Provide a secure environment as student move.
   b. Allow ingress and egress of only authorized persons.
   c. Facilitate student movement for release at the Release Gate.
   d. Maintain documentation of students leaving secure holding area.

iv. Release Gate Operations:

1. Verification Desk:
   a. Review and verify requester's identification and release paperwork.
   b. Route the requestor to the release station.
2. Student Release Station: (manned by school staff with familiarity of both students and families when possible)
   a. Reunite student and parent/guardian.
   b. Direct out of the immediate area.
   c. Retain and file release paperwork.

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b. **Exterior Operations:**
   i. **Identify crowd control/security needs:**
      1. Coordinate with Security Operations (if activated) to request staffing for high-conflict areas.

   ii. **Greeting/ Direction/Crowd Control Operations**
      1. Post clear signage to facilitate wayfinding and movement.
      2. Greet and direct arriving parents.
      3. Control movement to prevent crowding and provide an orderly intake process.

   iii. **Traffic /Parking Direction Operations**
      1. Place signage and traffic control devices.
      2. Monitor and control traffic on the site. (not public roadways).
      3. Give parking direction and initial wayfinding instructions to arriving parents/guardians.

c. **Security Operations: (Ideally a Law Enforcement officer from the local agency)**
      1. Provide coordination between Reunification lead and the lead Law Enforcement agency/ incident command.
      2. Provide command and control for all security activities.
         a. Identify available resources.
         b. Identify locations of potential need.
         c. Prioritize needs.
         d. Process requests from the Reunification Lead.
         e. Task and deploy as resources become available.

d. **Communications Plan:**
   i. Operational communications: (Insert Operational Communications Plan Here)
   ii. School Community communications: (Insert Community Communications Plan Here)

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