

WSPTA recognizes that the voice of families is key to any ongoing safety and emergency preparedness planning for both school districts and their communities. Students, teachers, and staff must have access to a safe learning environment.¹ With the recent COVID-19 crisis, it is evident that school districts and regional government agencies have work to do in order to provide this for all.²

Background

Many school districts in Washington state do not have adequate emergency equipment and supplies as well as response and continued operations plans.³ Emergency plans may not be communicated properly to local emergency management and first responder groups or families. RCW 28A.320.125⁴ requires districts to have plans in place, **but updates are not required unless funds are available.**

Safe School Plan Standards	
Elements	Mission Areas
Communication	Prevention
Drills, including reunification	Protection
Training for staff and students	Mitigation
Emergency supplies	Response
Incident command	Recovery/Continued Operations
Written plans, processes and procedures	Family & Community Awareness
School board policies	Family & Community Awareness

- In 2019, House Bill 1216⁵ was passed to bolster school safety in our state. But funding is needed for school districts with training and technical assistance⁶ for the development, annual updating, and implementation of safe school planning.
- As we are currently experiencing during a pandemic, our communities rely heavily on schools for continuation of services after emergencies, including education and food services.

Proposed Solutions

The WSPTA shall support legislation or policies that support emergency preparedness in schools through:

- Funding the regional school safety centers to provide training and technical assistance for the development, annual updating and implementation of comprehensive safe school planning including continued operations plans.
- Providing resources to districts for emergency supplies and equipment.
- Verifying compliance of emergency planning coordination between districts and local and regional emergency management and first responders.

For More Information

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For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website (www.wastatepta.org).

Citations

1. Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, School Safety Center, <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/school-safety-center>
2. Emergency Planning, <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/protect-and-mitigate/emergency-planning>
3. WSPTA Resolution 2.9, Emergency Preparedness, <https://www.wastatepta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/WSPTA-Resolution-2.9-Emergency-Preparedness-2019.pdf>
4. RCW 28A.320.125, Safe school plans—Requirements—Duties of school districts and schools—Reports—Drills—Rules—First responder agencies. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.320.125>
5. Washington State Legislation Second Substitute House Bill 1216, 2019-2020 Session, School Safety and Student Well Being, <http://lawfilesexext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1216-S2.SL.pdf?q=20201130130000>
6. Washington State Department of Natural Resources School Seismic Safety Project - <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/school-seismic-safety>