



MEMO

TO: Educational Facilities within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

FROM: Gerald L. Zahorchak, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Education 
Robert P. French, Director, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency 

DATE: July 1, 2009

RE: New Commonwealth "All-Hazards" School Safety Planning Toolkit

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) are pleased to announce the release of the new Commonwealth "All Hazards" School Safety Planning Toolkit. This planning toolkit features essential resources, legal citations, guidelines, and references to aid schools and districts in their efforts to plan for all types of disasters, natural and human-caused. We strongly encourage review of this document with your school safety and leadership teams, in coordination with your community emergency management and first responder partners.

Our goal is for all children to achieve at the highest levels in the content standards, graduate from high school, and go on to productive futures in the work force. Schools that foster safe and positive climates encourage increased academic achievement. The information contained in this toolkit will emphasize planning efforts in all phases of an emergency and should be integrated with your efforts to promote a safe and secure learning experience for our students and communities.

We express our deepest appreciation to personnel from our own agencies, as well as personnel from the Center for Safe Schools, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Office of Homeland Security, Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, Pennsylvania State Police, South Central Pennsylvania Task Force, participating schools and intermediate units, and the private citizens who worked so diligently to produce this toolkit.

The "All Hazards" School Safety Planning Toolkit will be posted on the PEMA website at <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=4625&&mode=2>. Additional school safety and security resources can be found at PDE's website at www.pde.state.pa.us.

Should you have questions on the toolkit, please contact the following staff members: Ms. Pamela Weeks, PEMA, at 717-651-2141 or pweeks@state.pa.us; or Mr. Mike Kozup, PDE, at 717-705-0353 or mkozup@state.pa.us.

Thank you for your attention to this important resource.