Foreword and Acknowledgements

The Pennsylvania "All-Hazards" School Safety Planning Toolkit was designed to help school districts/schools in their efforts to plan for all types of disasters, natural and human-caused. Everyone from the state level of government to the school districts/schools and the community at large has a moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety of our children in the event of a disaster.

Background: The original school safety planning toolkit was developed through the hard work of a group of individuals known as the *Safe Schools Planning Sub-Committee*, of the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Advisory Committee (a committee that then existed within the Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education). The original committee members listed below are commended for their insight into the need for this product and diligence in perservering to see the original version published in 2009.

Original Committee Members:

- ♦ Beth Bahn, Pennsylvania Department of Health
- ♦ Karen Borza, Pennsylvania State Police
- ♦ Charles Doll, Retired Principal
- ♦ Leah Galkowski, Center for Safe Schools
- ♦ George Giangi, South Central PA Task Force
- ♦ Steven Hoffman, Pennsylvania Office of Homeland Security
- ♦ Sandi Hollie, City of Philadelphia School district
- ♦ Dennis Hoyle, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- ♦ Michael Hurley, Carlisle Area School district and Chair, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials Safety Committee
- ♦ Michael Kozup, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- ♦ Shawn Mell, Pennsylvania State Police
- ◆ Thomas Mirabella, East Penn School district and former Administrator of the Diocese of Allentown
- ♦ Thomas Moriarty, Shippensburg Area Emergency Management Coordinator
- ◆ Terry Riley, Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12
- ♦ Pam Weeks, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
- ♦ Diana Woodside, Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General

Current Version: In keeping with the original intent that this toolkit be considered a "living document" some minor changes and updates had been added in the intervening years.

In 2013 PEMA personnel realized that a substantial modification needed to be made to the toolkit. This fact was especially evident after the event on December 14, 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Therefore PEMA established the AHSSAC (All Hazards School Safety Advisory Committee),

convened a review of the toolkit and has released this 2013 update product. PEMA acknowledges the contributions of the many of the original committee members who returned to assist with this update and additional members to replace those persons who retired or moved on professionally to other interests and assignments.

2013 Committee Members:

- ♦ Beth Bahn, Pennsylvania Department of Health
- ♦ Leah Galkowski, Center for Safe Schools
- ♦ John Yost, Pennsylvania Governor's Office of Homeland Security
- Michael Hurley, Carlisle Area School District and Chair, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials Safety Committee
- ♦ Michael Kozup, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- ◆ Carl Veach, Pennsylvania State Police
- ♦ Thomas Mirabella, East Penn School
- ♦ Thomas Moriarty, Shippensburg Area Emergency Management Coordinator
- ◆ Terry Riley, Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12
- ♦ Tim Roth, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
- ◆ Craig LeCadre, Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General
- ◆ Don Smith, Center for Safe Schools
- ♦ Michelle Nutter, Center for Safe Schools

Frequently Asked Question about the Toolkit:

- 1. Why Not a Template? As the committees developed the original toolkit and updates over the past years, the question was asked many times: "Why don't you just give us an emergency (all-hazards) plan template?" Quite simply the answer is that schools are so different based upon multiple factors that one "template" does not work in the Commonwealth. The process of planning through analysis of hazards and vulnerabilities, exploring capabilities and developing a customized plan is exponentially more valuable to schools than the final product. The final product of an all-hazards plan is not as valuable as the experience gained through training and exercising the plan. Therefore, while templates may be easier to use to create a final product they are not nearly as beneficial in the long run.
- 2. Why not a Flipchart? Flipcharts are valuable as quick references in an emergency. Schools are free to develop flip charts individually or in collaboration with counties, intermediate units or regions. Flipcharts, action guides, and checklists are components of emergency management but should not be used as replacements for a comprehensive all-hazard plan.

NIMS Terminology: Throughout this document, various terms may be referenced. In keeping with the philosophy of the National Incident Management System, it is recommended that all schools adopt this standard terminology to avoid confusion when working with partner agencies. Schools have both federal direction and gubernatorial (Pennsylvania specific) mandate to implement and utilize NIMS in all-hazard planning and response.

Looking Forward: As best practices in all-hazards planning and emergency management become available, this document will be updated. While no set time frame is established the intent is to review and update the Toolkit on an annual basis or after a significant event that impacts how schools plan and prepare for the variety of hazards that may affect their campuses.

The Toolkit will also be revised as emergency management migrates from the current four phases of emergency management (Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery) to the five missions areas Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery.

Feedback: The PEMA, AHSSAC welcomes feedback on this Toolkit. Information in the form of constructive criticism and suggestions for future topical areas are welcome. E-mail your information to <u>tiroth@pa.gov</u> or send written correspondence to PEMA- Bureau of Strategic Planning, 2605 Interstate drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110