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Promoting a Safe Environment



- Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) has been identified as a school district leader in Emergency Preparedness in Florida. During the 2006/07 school year, the Broward County School District's Safety Department was one of four school districts and two community colleges chosen by the State DOE to develop the "Educational Facilities Disaster & Crisis Management Guidebook", which was made available to all school districts and community colleges nationwide through an educational clearinghouse.
- In 1994, Broward was the first school district in Florida to include an Enhanced Hurricane Protection Area (EHPA) in our new school construction program. The state code was passed in 1999.
- BCPS received the Governor's Award in 2000 for its Hurricane Emergency Preparedness Program and its EHPA program.
- Emergency Plans are located on the Safety Department Web site. A Districtwide Emergency Preparedness Manual covers the most common emergencies; the Hurricane Shelter Procedures Manual addresses the change from school operations to shelters; and an Emergency Operations Center Manual covers transformation of the Technology Center to a command center for the District should the administrative building be impacted by a storm or other event.
- Broward was the first school district in Florida to have a computerized, joint fire/safety comprehensive inspection program.
- Broward was the first school district to have a district-wide KNOX Box emergency key box program for emergency services.
- BCPS was the first school district to have a district-wide Automated External Defibrillators (AED) program. There are currently over 300 AEDs in schools and District sites, which have been upgraded to meet new standards.
- BCPS was the first school district to implement the WeatherBug Weather Alert System for severe weather, including Heat Index Alert, Wind Alert, Lightning Warnings and Heavy Rain Alert. The system is supplied using cell phones equipped with GPS. This system is designed to protect students and staff at all outside events. High Schools started the program in July 2006 and was implemented District wide during 2007. This program has been picked up by other school districts and the NFL. Information from WeatherBug's weather stations located at schools in Broward County is now used daily by CBS channel 4 in their daily weather reports.
- In 2004, the Safety Department implemented the District's "Single Point Entry Program". This is a joint program involving representatives from the Design Department, Maintenance Department, SIU Department and the Safety Department. This group is surveying all schools and designing plans that will allow only one single point entry onto a school site during the normal operations of the school. Elementary Schools are in the final stages of completion, followed by Middle Schools, Centers and High Schools.
- In 2005, the Safety Department received the Broward County Council of PTA's Welfare of Children Award for their outstanding dedication and support for all children.
- In 2006, the Safety Department's Director, Jerry Graziose, received the 2006 American Fire Sprinkler Association's (AFSA) "Fire Sprinklers Save Lives" award. This award was presented to acknowledge the fire sprinkler program that has

been implemented in the School District by the Safety Department.

- All of our schools have individual safety plans that detail what action(s) are to be taken in an emergency/crisis situation. The plans are shared with emergency responders, including the local fire and police agencies to assist when an emergency response is needed.
- Thirty-six schools are used as Emergency Shelters. Twenty-nine are used by the American Red Cross, five are special needs shelters, one employee shelter, and one is a pet friendly shelter. The Pet Friendly Shelter was the first in South Florida and one of only a few located in the State. Forty school shelters are constructed with an Enhanced Hurricane Protection Area (EHPA).
- For the duration of the 2005 Hurricane Season, the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Safety spent over 298 hours at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The 2006 Hurricane Season was much quieter, with only a little over 35 hours spent at the EOC for Tropical Storm Ernesto. There was no activity during the 2007 hurricane season.
- BCPS is an active participant in Mutual Aid Programs to help districts recover from natural disasters. In 2004, staff, equipment and supplies were directed to two Florida school districts (Orange and St. Lucie) for school repairs due to Hurricane Charley and Jeanne. The Safety Department also worked with the Jefferson Parrish, New Orleans School District to assist with their response to Hurricane Katrina.
- Safety staff coordinates the District's Joint Fire, Safety and Health comprehensive

inspections of every school District owned or leased site, twice a year, as well as, conducts playground inspections. This totals around 319 sites.

- The Safety Department is the liaison department between the School District and FEMA on reimbursements for hurricane storm damages. We are currently working on FEMA claims for five hurricanes. To date, the School District has received over \$33 million dollars in storm reimbursements.
- During 2007, members of the School District's Safety Department have attended classes and received NIMS certification as required by FEMA for future emergency situations and reimbursements.
- Staff's role in the Emergency Preparedness Program is to cover all safety emergencies, weather emergencies, fire drills, chemical spills, gas leaks, etc. Details are available on the Safety Department Web site at:
(www.broward.k12.fl.us/safetydept/).

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