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| A blue outline of a state on a black background  Description automatically generated | ***School Safety and Emergency Management*** | A map with icons and symbols  Description automatically generated |

### Tabletop Exercise Scenario: School Bus Accident on the Way to School

**Scenario Overview**: At 7:45 AM, a school bus carrying 30 students is involved in a severe accident with another vehicle on the way to school. The driver of the other vehicle is deceased, and several students on the bus are injured, requiring transport by ambulance to the local hospital. The accident scene is chaotic, with emergency responders arriving on-site. The incident is traumatic for all students and staff involved, raising immediate concerns about their emotional and mental health.

### Goals:

* Increase awareness and develop a proactive approach of an if-then mindset for school staff, building level, and district level administrators. *If* there is a bus accident, *then* what plan, policy or procedure needs to be carried out?
* Determine if current district and building policy, emergency operating procedures (EOP), and practice are adequate for handling a serious school bus accident.
* Facilitate the updating of district and school policy and EOP to address physical and emotional trauma following such incidents.

### Scenario Details and Discussion Prompts

#### **Phase 1: Immediate Response (7:45 AM - 8:00 AM)**

1. **Initial Notification**:
   * **Prompt**: You receive a call from emergency services informing you of the bus accident. What are your immediate steps in the first few minutes? Who do you notify, and what information do you need to gather?
2. **Safety and Security**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you ensure the safety of the uninjured students at the accident scene? Consider coordination with emergency responders and securing the area.
3. **Communication**:
   * **Prompt**: What methods do you use to communicate the situation to the school administration, district office, and parents? What information is critical to convey at this stage?

#### **Phase 2: Short-Term Management (8:00 AM - 10:00 AM)**

1. **Handling Injuries**:
   * **Prompt**: Several students are injured and need to be transported to the hospital. How do you coordinate with medical personnel and ensure that injured students receive the necessary care? What information do you provide to the hospital?
2. **Managing the Uninjured**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you manage the students who are uninjured but present at the accident scene? What steps do you take to ensure their emotional and physical well-being?
3. **Parental Communication**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you communicate with the parents of all students involved, both injured and uninjured? What key information do you need to provide, and how do you address their concerns?

#### **Phase 3: Addressing Emotional and Mental Health (10:00 AM - 2:00 PM)**

1. **Immediate Support**:
   * **Prompt**: What immediate steps do you take to address the emotional and mental health needs of students involved in the accident? How do you provide support for those who witnessed the fatality and injuries?
2. **School-wide Impact**:
   * **Prompt**: The news of the accident spreads quickly through the school. How do you address the emotional impact on the broader student body and staff? What support systems do you put in place?
3. **Communication and Counseling**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you communicate with parents about the support available for their children? What resources do you offer, and how do you facilitate access to counseling services?

#### **Phase 4: Long-Term Support and Policy Review**

1. **Ongoing Support**:
   * **Prompt**: In the weeks following the accident, what long-term support strategies do you implement for the students and staff affected? How do you monitor and address ongoing emotional and mental health needs?
2. **Policy Evaluation**:
   * **Prompt**: Based on the incident, how do you evaluate current policies and procedures related to school bus safety and accident response? What gaps or weaknesses have been identified?
3. **Procedure Updates**:
   * **Prompt**: What specific updates or changes to policies and procedures do you propose to better handle future incidents? Consider aspects like communication, safety protocols, and mental health support.
4. **Training and Preparedness**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you incorporate lessons learned from this incident into future training and preparedness drills for staff and students? What key areas need more focus or improvement?

### Conclusion

* Summarize the key points discussed during the exercise.
* Highlight any immediate action items and assign responsible parties.
* Reiterate the importance of continuous improvement and preparedness.

This scenario provides open-ended prompts that encourage participants to think critically about their roles and responsibilities, ensuring a thorough evaluation of current practices and identification of necessary updates.