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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: Severe Winter Storm with Power Outage

**Scenario Overview**: A severe winter storm has hit the region, causing significant snowfall and strong winds. As a result, the school experiences a power outage mid-morning, and weather conditions are deteriorating more rapidly than forecasted. With some roads becoming impassable, it is uncertain how long the power outage will last, and the school needs to manage student safety, communication, and a potential early dismissal, or sheltering students that cannot be picked up.

### Goals:

* Increase awareness and develop a proactive approach of an if-then mindset for school staff, building level, and district level administrators. *If* a sever weather storm disrupts operations, *then* what plan, policy or procedure needs to be carried out?
* Determine if current district and building policy, emergency operating procedure (EOP), and practice are adequate for handling disruptive and potentially aggressive parents.
* Facilitate the updating of district and school policy and EOP for ensuring safety and security during such incidents.

### Scenario Details and Discussion Prompts

#### **Phase 1: Initial Response (Power Outage)**

1. **Immediate Actions**:
   * **Prompt**: The power goes out mid-morning during the severe winter storm. What are your immediate steps? Who needs to be notified first, and how do you prioritize your actions?
2. **Ensuring Student Safety**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you ensure the immediate safety of the students? What steps do you take to maintain a calm and orderly environment during the power outage?
3. **Securing the Building**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you ensure the building remains secure and safe without power? What measures do you take to monitor and control access points?

#### **Phase 2: Managing the Situation**

1. **Communication with Utility Providers**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you communicate with utility providers to get updates on the power outage? Who is responsible for this communication, and how do you relay this information to the rest of the school?
2. **Maintaining Basic Operations**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you maintain basic operations such as lighting, heating, and restroom facilities during the power outage? What resources and plans are in place to address these needs?
3. **Decision on Early Dismissal**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you decide whether to dismiss students early or keep them at school until the end of the day? What factors influence this decision, and how do you communicate it to parents and staff?

#### **Phase 3: Communication and Updates**

1. **Notifying Parents and Community**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you notify parents and the community about the power outage and the school’s response? What key information do you include in your communication to ensure transparency and reassurance?
2. **Handling Media Inquiries**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you handle media inquiries about the incident? What is your strategy for managing public relations and maintaining the school’s reputation?
3. **Providing Updates**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you provide regular updates to staff and students during the power outage? What methods do you use to ensure accurate and timely information is shared?

#### **Phase 4: Evacuation or Sheltering in Place**

1. **Decision to Evacuate or Shelter in Place**:
   * **Prompt**: If conditions worsen, how do you decide whether to evacuate the school or shelter in place? What criteria do you use, and who is involved in making this decision?
2. **Coordinating with Transportation**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you coordinate with transportation services to manage student pickup or evacuation? What challenges might arise, and how do you address them?
3. **Managing Student Release**:
   * **Prompt**: How do you manage the release of students to parents or guardians? What procedures are in place to ensure a safe and orderly process? What about students that cannot be picked up?

#### **Phase 5: Review and Policy Updates**

1. **Evaluating Current Policies**:
   * **Prompt**: Based on the incident, how do you evaluate the effectiveness of current policies and emergency operating procedures regarding handling severe weather and power outages? What gaps or weaknesses have been identified?
2. **Procedure Updates**:
   * **Prompt**: What specific updates or changes to policies and procedures do you propose to better handle similar situations in the future? Consider aspects like communication strategies, emergency supplies, and coordination with utility providers.
3. **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?
4. **Preventative Measures**:
   * **Prompt**: What steps can the school take to prevent or mitigate the impact of future severe weather incidents? How can you work with local authorities, utility providers, and the community to enhance safety and preparedness?

### 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 framework 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.