



Examine the ability of K-12 school and higher education officials and community partners with roles and responsibilities in school safety to identify, prioritize, and plan for potential threats or hazards; establish lines of coordination and communication, share information, execute emergency plans during an incident; and validate training and resources to provide for the well-being of students and staff before, during, and after an incident.

The National Exercise Program (NEP) is a two-year cycle of exercises across the nation that examines and validates capabilities in all preparedness mission areas. The 2019-2020 NEP cycle is guided by nine Principals’ Strategic Priorities, established by the National Security Council and informed by national preparedness data.

What are School Safety and Security exercises?

Exercises aligned to this priority should:

- Emphasize the integration of school officials with community partners, such as first responders, emergency managers, public and mental health officials, and children and families
- Assess preparedness at an academic institution, which includes schools for kindergarten through 12th grade and institutions of higher education
- Evaluate the ability to coordinate beyond the initial 12 hours of the incident, to include appropriate recovery elements that impact the overall well-being of students and staff

Related Core Capabilities

- Intelligence and Information Sharing
- On-Scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement
- Operational Coordination
- Situational Assessment
- Planning
- Public Information and Warning

Why is this important?

States, territories, tribes, urban areas, and other communities use the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) to assess their preparedness. FEMA includes the results of the THIRA and SPR, along with several other preparedness indicators, in the annual National Preparedness Report (NPR). Analytic results help shape planning, training, exercise, and other prioritization decisions at all levels.

Lessons Learned and Emerging Threats

- A 2016 Government Accountability Office (GAO) study found that while most school districts have plans addressing multiple hazards and emergency procedures, the Federal government needs to coordinate to **help ensure consistent guidance, terminology, and messaging**
- The U.S. Department of Education’s *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans* emphasized the need to **develop age-appropriate drills** that **focus on roles and responsibilities** during an actual emergency
- The percentage of schools with plans for **procedures to be performed in the event of a shooting** increased from 79% in 2003-04 to 92% in 2015-16



Spotlight: Campus Resilience Program

The **Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Campus Resilience Program** empowers institutions of higher education to improve preparedness and build resilience for threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to campus communities. By hosting a series of campus-based events to test and promote preparedness, the program enables the higher education community to gain insight into planning, response, and recovery best practices, and to build relationships with other academic institutions and government partners. Learn more at dhs.gov/academicresilience.

