

SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY  
**TASK FORCE**  
POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY, IOWA



2022

*Creating Safe and Secure Learning Environments  
for our Most Critical Resource*



Pottawattamie County Emergency Management & Homeland Security

This page intentionally blank.

**Introductory Letter**

August 18, 2022

**Re: Pottawattamie School Safety & Security Program Initiative Invitation**



Dear School Preparedness Partners,

There is only one thing I can imagine more terrible than the news reporting on another incident somewhere in the country resulting in injuries or fatalities at a school and that would be those news crews flooding to somewhere in our county. Whether we are talking about a shooting scenario or a severe weather event, we have real risks and vulnerabilities. Sometimes this reality gets sidelined with our everyday lives and responsibilities until another incident makes national news.

Not long after the Uvalde, Texas school shooting, the Governor of Iowa announced ramping up the Governor's School Safety Bureau embedded in the Department of Public Safety and grant funding available to enhance school security. Since then, that program has been developed and we are now seeing more concrete information on requirements to access those funds and the direction the program(s) will take.

Here at emergency management, we hope to seize this opportunity for a few reasons. 1) To assist schools in minimizing the timeline to qualify, apply for, and receive funding; 2) To formulate a system to make sure that our schools, public safety, and support organizations are preparing in a coordinated way and from a common operating picture; and 3) To facilitate a culture throughout the county that recognizes we can't just get serious about the safety and security of our schools when we witness another tragedy on television.

With this in mind, I am calling on each of our organizations to take an active role in the concepts and initiatives laid out in this document. It will be a living, breathing strategy that will evolve as we collectively identify priorities and needs. I appreciate the significant workload and tight schedules we all navigate daily, but I also find no excuse in that fact when you consider some of the tragic after-action revelations of poor school planning and public safety response coordination that have contributed to poor outcomes at various school emergencies.

Please take time to review this document, contemplate your participation, and provide us with the included requests for representative appointments at your earliest convenience by emailing them to [ema@pcema-ia.org](mailto:ema@pcema-ia.org). More information, access to additional resources, and task force priority actions will continue to be shared with you directly or within our EOC Daily Operations Brief.

If you have any questions please contact me directly, by email or mobile phone, and know that your active participation and support of this countywide collaborative effort is needed and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Doug Reed, Director  
Emergency Management & Homeland Security  
Pottawattamie County, Iowa



## I. Purpose & Mission

This task force is established to create and sustain a coordinated approach to the continual improvement of school safety and security in Pottawattamie County, Iowa by establishing guidance, assistance, policies, strategies, and programs to assist schools in preparing for, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering from natural and man-made threats and incidents.

The task force will also facilitate the strengthening of partnerships, coordination, and communication between schools, public safety, and supporting organizations with a common responsibility and interest in securing schools.

## II. Vision

Utilize a shared approach founded on mutual understanding, coordination, and cooperation in the execution of emergency management strategies to develop, enhance, and sustain the ability to prepare, test, and execute individual district, facility, and agency plans from a common operating picture to provide the safest and most secure educational environments possible.

## III. Goals

- Facilitate support and assistance in the development, maintenance, and testing of coordinated school emergency planning and compliance requirements within Iowa Code §280.30.
- Coordinate and administratively support the development of School Vulnerability Assessment Teams that can assist schools in identifying hazards, vulnerabilities, risks, and gaps at their facilities.
- Facilitate development of multi-agency response strategies that ensures public safety and school district emergency plans are complimentary and avoid conflicting operations and procedures that would jeopardize effectiveness.
- Develop and implement a multi-year joint school planning, training, and exercise plan.

## IV. Task Force Membership

A. The Task Force should include the following membership:

1. K-12 Public and Non-Public Schools

- (1) representative from each registered public or private school within Pottawattamie County as registered with the Iowa Department of Education.
  - The representative shall be an executive/administrative member of the district with the authority (inherent or delegated) to make decisions on behalf of their district as it relates to the mission of the task force.
  - Examples include superintendent, president, principal, or an executive/administrative district/system position with safety and security as a documented primary job function.

2. Specialty Schools, Higher Education, Public Safety, and Support Organizations

- Iowa School for the Deaf
- Iowa Western Community College
- Green Hills Area Education Agency
- Pottawattamie County Sheriff, or designee
- Council Bluffs Police Chief, or designee



- Pottawattamie County Emergency Management Director, or designee
- Council Bluffs Fire Chief, or designee
- Pottawattamie County Firemen’s Association designee

Membership will be recognized upon execution and submittal of the participation acknowledgement form found at [Attachment 1](#).

A member organization may terminate its membership by providing written notice to the task force and is effective upon notice or may decline participation in this effort by providing an email to the Emergency Management Agency stating they are declining participation in this joint countywide initiative. Emails should be submitted to [ema@pcema-ia.org](mailto:ema@pcema-ia.org).

**B. Additional / Ex-Officio members or Invitees:**

Identified supporting organizations will be routinely invited to participate in task force meetings and events. These organizations either have a normal and significant relationship to the education sector in the county or provide expertise and resources for the safety and security of schools. Additional organizations may be included in task force activities as deemed necessary or appropriate. Examples of such organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD)
- USDHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) – Omaha Field Office
- Local elected officials

**V. Scope**

This Task Force, inclusive of its adopted programs, standards, recommendations, and guidelines will be applicable to all signatory organizations of the Task Force. This endeavor is a joint and voluntary undertaking to fulfill the spirit of various applicable statutes, rules, and security grant program requirements in effort to enhance school safety and security and to build systemic collaborative partnerships across the public safety and education continuum.

**Registered Educational Institutions of Pottawattamie County**

Public Schools	
District / School System	Enrollment
AHSTW Community School District	766
Council Bluffs Community School District	8689
Lewis Central Community School District	2628
Riverside Community School District	695
Treynor Community School District	592
Tri-Center Community School District	937
Underwood Community School District	766
Non-Public Schools	
Heartland Christian School	150
One School Global – Council Bluffs Campus	12
Saint Albert Schools	545
Community Colleges	
Iowa Western Community College	5977
Board of Regents Institutions	
Iowa School for the Deaf	104
<i>Public/Non-Public enrollment per IA Dept of Education 2021-2022</i>	
	21,861



Note: The Task Force does not replace established local/facility planning teams. These teams are essential in developing facility-specific emergency operations plans and identifying local needs. Products of the Task Force are not intended to replace existing plans that meet the planning standards required in law. The work of the Task Force is intended to assist schools in ensuring that public safety and school plans are a coordinated, complimentary effort, and to coordinate overall response concepts, strategies, training, and exercise efforts. The work of the Task Force may be used to enhance or augment annual revisions of existing qualifying planning efforts at the desire of educational districts and systems.

## VI. Roles and Responsibilities

### A. School Safety and Security Task Force

- Develop a countywide joint response strategy to school emergencies that focuses on the direction, control, coordination, and information operations of responses.
- Develop and issue school response recommendations based on best practices.
- Develop a common approach to school vulnerability assessments and identification of countywide needs and gaps.
- Develop a recommended countywide planning, training, exercise calendar for school safety and security preparedness.
- Maintain a meeting schedule to discuss and address common countywide needs related to school safety and security.

### B. Emergency Management Agency

- Facilitate, coordinate, and administratively support the task force and its initiatives.
- Provide technical tools and assistance to individual school planning and preparedness efforts.
- Organize, coordinate, and support a countywide school vulnerability assessment team initiative.

### C. K-12 Public and Non-Public Schools

- Provide a representative to actively engage in Task Force activities.
- Establish school emergency planning teams:
  - District-wide Safety & Security Team: a team of district executive/administrative staff and individual facility safety and security team representatives to address district- or system-wide safety and security topics, issues, and initiatives.
  - Facility (Building) Safety & Security Team: at the school facility level, a team is developed to address facility specific safety and security topics, issues, and initiatives.
- Annually review emergency plans, procedures, and protocols.
- Maintain annual compliance with school safety and security requirements outlined in Iowa Code §280.30.

### D. Iowa School for the Deaf

- Provide a representative to actively engage in Task Force activities.
- Establish a school Safety & Security Team of appointed school personnel to address ISD specific safety and security topics, issues, and initiatives.



#### E. Iowa Western Community College

- Provide a representative to actively engage in Task Force activities.
- Establish a college Safety & Security Team of appointed school personnel (departmental and administrative) to address IWCC specific safety and security topics, issues, and initiatives.

#### F. Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Office

- Provide a lead agency representative to actively engage in Task Force activities and serve as the Sheriff's designated school safety and security planning coordinator.
- Provide additional personnel, as determined necessary, to assist in the conduct of school vulnerability assessments within the rural school districts of the county, including CBCSD Crescent Elementary.
- Participate in district-wide or facility specific safety and security team planning, training, and exercise activities.
- Actively participate in the development of a multi-agency, multi-discipline response strategy plan to address direction, control, and coordination aspects of responses to school emergencies and incidents.
- Implement applicable Task Force guidelines into agency response protocols.

#### G. Council Bluffs Police Department

- Provide a lead agency representative to actively engage in Task Force activities and serve as the Chief's designated school safety and security planning coordinator.
- Provide additional personnel, as determined necessary, to assist in the conduct of school vulnerability assessments within the department's response jurisdiction, inclusive of ISD and IWCC.
- Participate in district-wide or facility specific safety and security team planning, training, and exercise activities.
  - School Resource Officers would be the likely assigned personnel for participating in facility specific planning teams; the lead representative for the department should participate in district-wide planning activities.
- Actively participate in the development of a multi-agency, multi-discipline response strategy plan to address direction, control, and coordination aspects of responses to school emergencies and incidents.
- Implement applicable Task Force guidelines into agency response protocols.

#### H. Carter Lake Police Department

- Participate in the facility safety and security planning, training, and exercise activities for the CBCSD Carter Lake Elementary School.
- Implement applicable Task Force guidelines into agency response protocols.

#### I. Council Bluffs Fire Department

- Provide a lead agency representative to actively engage in Task Force activities and serve as the Chief's designated school safety and security planning coordinator.
- Provide additional personnel, as determined necessary, to assist in the conduct of school vulnerability assessments within the department's response jurisdiction.
- Participate in district-wide or facility specific safety and security team planning, training, and exercise activities.
- Actively participate in the development of a multi-agency, multi-discipline response strategy plan to address direction, control, and coordination aspects of responses to school emergencies and incidents.
- Implement applicable Task Force guidelines into agency response protocols.



J. Pottawattamie County Firemen's Association

- Provide a designee to represent rural Fire and EMS agencies in Task Force activities.

K. Local Fire Departments (*community, township, and private nonprofit*)

- Participate in district-wide or facility specific safety and security team planning, training, and exercise activities for schools in their primary response jurisdiction.
- Implement applicable Task Force guidelines into agency response protocols.

L. Green Hills Area Education Agency

- Provide a designated representative to engage in Task Force activities.
- Distribute Task Force information to AEA employees embedded in school districts within Pottawattamie County.
- Support the assigning of embedded AEA personnel to district and facility safety and security teams to aid in planning, training, and exercise activities.
- Engage directly with the Emergency Management Agency to develop countywide guidelines and a response team capable of providing reunification operations and coordination to a school emergency or incident.

## VII. Concept of Operations

The Task Force will engage in strategic planning and guidance development consistent with the principles and doctrine contained within the National Response Framework and National Incident Management System to ensure all organizations responsible for addressing threats to and impacting our schools are prepared and can respond in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner to reduce loss of life, injury, and property damage.

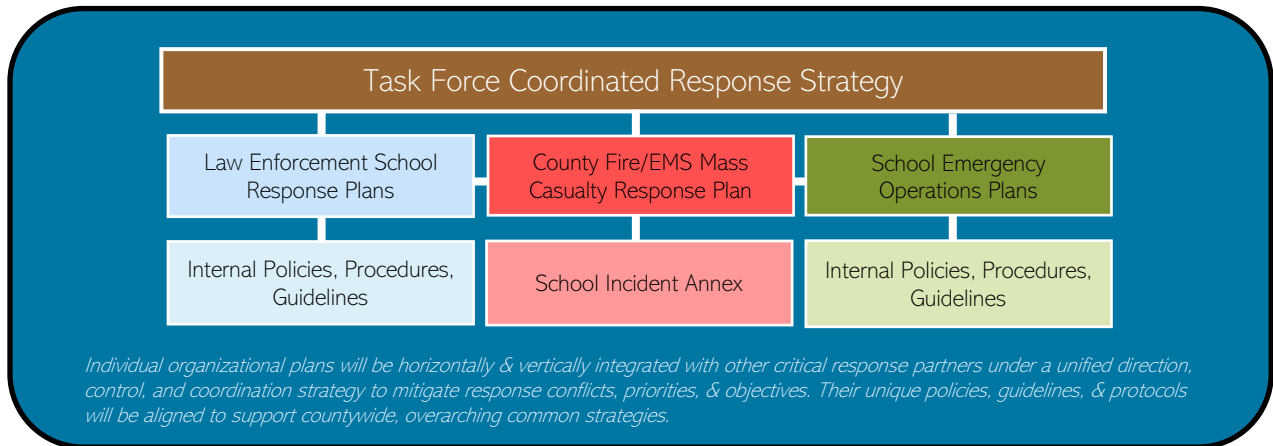
This county is host to twelve (12) recognized educational institutions spread over nearly 1,000 square miles and serving over 20,000 students of varying socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, and special needs. There are (19) local/county first responder agencies that provide public safety services to these institutions. This number of primary response agencies, number of school districts/systems, and the geography which they are distributed across requires a cooperative and collaborative effort to achieve meaningful progress that can be sustained as it relates to school safety and security.

A. Planning

- Develop a common coordinated response strategy that will address the overall direction, control, and coordination between public safety agencies, schools, supporting agencies, and mutual aid response assets.
- Facilitate a process by which the individual organizational response plans (schools, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical) complement each other to avoid conflicting tactical objectives that would hamper emergency response efforts.
- Ensure all applicable plans are consistent with the principles of the National Preparedness Goal, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the Incident Command System (ICS).
- Include a recommended planning review cycle into a multi-year School Safety and Security Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP).







## B. Training

- Support training programs already utilized by task force partners.
- Develop training recommendations and coordinate access to training that will support multi-agency, multi-discipline operations (i.e., NIMS, Incident Command System, Mass Casualty, Reunification, Active Shooter, etc.).
- Include annual training opportunities available to all task force partner organizations into a multi-year School Safety and Security Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP).

## C. Exercise

- Develop standardized exercise packets and materials that can be utilized by schools and partners to conduct annual exercises (drill, tabletop, functional, full-scale).
- Include annual countywide exercise opportunities (workshops, seminars, tabletop, functional, full-scale) to test and validate the multi-jurisdictional strategies developed by the task force into a multi-year School Safety and Security Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP).

## D. Administration

- The Task Force shall meet at a frequency determined by its membership and consistent with providing the necessary guidance and support in order for local schools to meet statutory planning requirements, qualify and meet eligibility requirements for security assistance grants through the State of Iowa, and sustainment and continual improvement of the school emergency preparedness culture throughout the county.
- The Emergency Management Agency will be responsible for keeping records of Task Force meetings, scheduling, invitations, and other required administrative functions to support the mission of the Task Force.
- The duration of the Task Force will be perpetual until such time as it is dissolved by unanimous decision of the recognized membership.



POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY, IOWA  
SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY TASK FORCE

**Participating Organization Acknowledgement for  
Schools, AEA, and Public Safety Organizations**

**WHEREAS** the State of Iowa has implemented legal requirements for school emergency planning as well as requirements to qualify for funding assistance programs to secure school facilities and all aspects of these requirements involves collaborative efforts between schools, public safety, emergency management, and community partners; and

**WHEREAS** there are many aspects to school safety and security operations before, during, and after a school emergency that transcends school district and system boundaries as well as public safety jurisdictional boundaries; and

**WHEREAS** it is recognized that the Pottawattamie County School Safety and Security Task Force was developed to provide coordination, assistance, and to ensure that "high-quality" school emergency operations plans, and security initiatives can be integrated with community, regional, and state plans and best practices; and

**WHEREAS** it is the commitment and obligation of the entire public safety and education sectors to ensure every effort is made to be able to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies of all-hazards that may impact the health, safety, and welfare of students.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ACKNOWLEDGED** that the \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization name here

recognizes its duty and obligation to collaborate with partners to provide for the most secure and safe educational environments for the student population of Pottawattamie County, Iowa and pledges its cooperation and participation in the Pottawattamie County School Safety and Security Task Force.

Authorized by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organizational Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*Appointed Task Force Representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone  
*(For SMS Meeting Notices/Reminders/Alerts)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Office Phone

\* *The representative shall be an executive/administrative member of the district (or system), agency, or organization with the authority (inherent or delegated) to make decisions on behalf of their district as it relates to the mission of the task force.*



POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY, IOWA  
SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY TASK FORCE

**Appointment Letter for Designated Public Safety Agencies**

In recognition of our agency's participation in and support of the School Safety and Security Task Force, we affirm committing personnel resources to conduct school facility vulnerability assessments. This initiative not only assists schools with qualifying for needed school security improvement funding through the State of Iowa but is an effort that should be sustained to allow for continual improvement of school safety and security preparedness efforts.

It is understood that two (2) assessment teams will be formed:

- **Council Bluffs Team** consisting of CBPD, CBFDD, and PCEMA for the conduct of assessments within the CBPD response jurisdiction.
- **County Team** consisting of PCSO and PCEMA for the conduct of assessments within the rural community school districts within the county.

Note: additional representatives may join the teams as they are available which include, but may not be limited to: Governor's School Safety Bureau, Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (DHS), etc.

Emergency Management will facilitate coordination of the teams, including standardized assessment criteria consistent with Iowa Homeland Security and CISA assessments, support materials, scheduling coordination, assessor training, final report drafting, etc.

Compensation and expenses for participation in this effort will be the responsibility of the participating agency.

---

Agency Designation:  **Council Bluffs Police Department** (designate 2)  
 (Check your agency)  **Council Bluffs Fire Department** (designate 1)  
 **Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Office** (designate 2)  
 **Emergency Management Agency** (designate 1)

---

**Appointees and Approval**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name Email Cell Phone

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name Email Cell Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Approved By (Name) Title Date





205 South Main Street  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501  
(712) 328-5777 | [ema@pcema-ia.org](mailto:ema@pcema-ia.org)  
<https://pcema-ia.org>