

# Friend Public Schools

## CRISIS RESPONSE MANUAL



20\_\_-20\_\_

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## PHONE NUMBERS

Friend Public School.....	947-2781
Friend Medical Center.....	947-2021
Warren Memorial Hospital.....	947-2541
Dr. Robert McKeeman (Home).....	947-7981
LPS Crisis Team.....	473-7954

### FPS CRISIS TEAM

Dr. Mike Moody, Supt.....	212-2670
Ben Dempsey 7-12 Principal .....	947-1490 or 641-3198
Alyson Dickinson Elem. Principal & K-12 Guidance.....	947-2404
Tressa Beckler.....	641-3045
Michele Johnson-Clouse.....	947-2116 or 947-1079
Diane Kremer.....	270-2674
Paul Martin.....	947-2093
Michelle Schiffern .....	641-5623
Ruth Ziegler .....	947-3281 or 947-1082

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Fire.....	911
Police.....	911 or 947-5531
Sheriff's Offices.....	911 or
Fillmore – Geneva.....	759-4441
Saline – Wilber.....	821-2111
Seward – Seward.....	643-4578

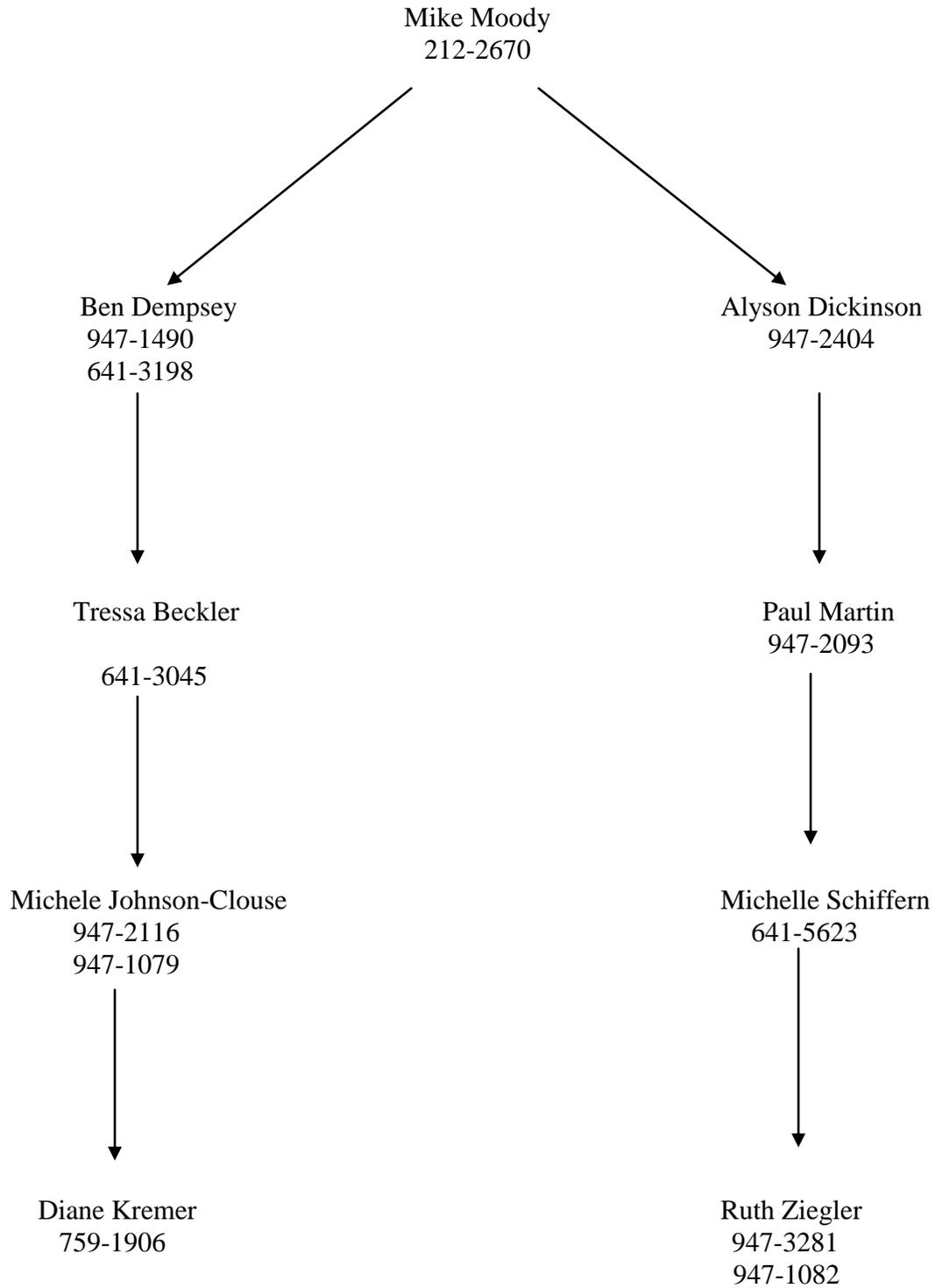
### AREA SCHOOLS

Exeter.....	266-5911
Dorchester.....	946-2781
Geneva.....	759-3141
Centennial.....	534-2321
Fairmont.....	268-3411

### BOARD MEMBERS

Rich Dickinson.....	947-2404
Jack Stutzman .....	947-2059
Brian Himmelberg .....	947-2143
Paul Segner .....	947-2089
Nate Klenke .....	947-2431
Scott Spohn.....	947-2255

# CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM CALLING TREE



## OVERVIEW

The purpose of this manual is to provide the team with a reference guide to use in a crisis. This is based on the premise that a preplanned and organized approach is more effective in reducing psychological and social difficulties following a crisis in a school.

The Crisis Response Manual includes procedures that were designed to deal with a number of crises that could occur in the district. These procedures do not cover every condition that might develop and it may not always be possible to follow every procedural step.

The Crisis Response Team is a supportive service, by specially trained school members, which can help schools assess, plan, and intervene in crises affecting staff and students.

### Crisis Response Team Services:

- Meet with building administrators and key staff to formulate an action plan
- Facilitate staff meeting to provide information related to the crisis
- Support school staff
- Help teachers process information with students
- Work with students individually or in groups
- Be available for contact with parents
- Provide helpful, factual information to parents
- Assist in handling media coverage

## **MEDIA PROCEDURES**

The only means to inform the general public is by the mass media; therefore, it is important to ensure that the media receive prompt, accurate information. Isolated quotes from individuals can be incomplete or misleading and should be avoided.

After calling appropriate emergency personnel and following safety procedures:

- Do not allow media personnel in the building.
- Notify the superintendent's office, 947-2781.
- Refer media contacts to the superintendent's office.
- Inform office staff of the situation and how to handle phone inquiries.
- Prepare a written statement to be read.
- Recommend that students and staff not talk to the media.

### **Tips for Interviews**

In the event that it is determined to be appropriate and/or necessary for you to speak with the media:

- Be honest. If you don't know the answer to the question, say so. Tell the reporter you will get back to him/her with the answer as soon as you can. If you make a mistake in an interview, say so.
- There is no such thing as "off the record."
- If you are in a room with a microphone or a camera, always assume that they are turned on.
- Try to have a goal for the interview. What do you want to accomplish?
- Prepare for the interview. If you need more time, ask for it.
- Understand what you are going to say so that you can talk about the topic knowledgeably.
- Anticipate the "worst question" you may have to answer and plan for that in advance.
- Bridge a question from where you are in the interview to where you want to be.
- Never say "no comment." It makes it sound like you have something to hide.
- Don't use jargon. You won't have a translator.

# **NEWS MEDIA POLICY IN CRISIS SITUATIONS**

## **For**

# **THE FRIEND PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

Welcome to the Friend Public Schools. Here you will receive a copy of our press policy and information about where you may set up cameras, conduct interviews, etc.

We recognize that your professional ethics are our greatest protection against an overly intrusive or disruptive presence in our schools. We know that you recognize that young people are particularly vulnerable during times of stress, and that it is our duty to protect them from any additional pressure. This pressure may simply be the results of the numbers of you responding from various news organizations and not any overt action on your part.

Please read carefully the following points:

### Press Releases:

Any press releases will be given to you in written form, as well as spoken, and whenever possible, our administrators will try to be available for follow-up questions after the press release is read.

### Interview Controls:

1. No student may be interviewed without the permission of the principal or his/her designee.
2. No individual student may be approached or filmed in the halls or any area of the school property without the permission of the principal or his/her designee.

### Equipment:

In the event that many press people gather at an assembly or public meeting dealing with a crisis in our schools, and it is judged by the administrators that their presence may be potentially intrusive, the administration may require that television stations combine their camera equipment, light, and other distracting displays of equipment

# TRAUMATIC INJURY TO STUDENT OR STAFF

Immediate actions to be taken by administrator(s):

- Obtain facts concerning the injury(ies).
- Notify Crisis Team. Refer to calling tree, page 4.
- Decide on time and place for a staff meeting.
- Activate Friend calling tree, page 5.

Secondary actions to be taken by administrator(s) in conjunction with the crisis team:

- Update information concerning injury(ies).
- Develop a plan for the day.
  - Elementary – Room 29
  - Secondary – Room 2
- Meet with **ALL** building staff.
- Make announcements to students.
- Plan for substitute teachers as needed.
- Notify other schools affected.
- Identify students/staff most affected.
- **If necessary, call LPS Crisis Team Line (402) 473-7954.**

## STUDENT OR STAFF DEATH

Reporting person notifies the superintendent, principal, or counselor.

### Administration:

- Obtains facts, verifies information
- Notifies Crisis Team
- Decides on time and place for CRT meeting
- Decides on time and place for all staff meeting
- Activates calling tree
  - Information is to be factual information only
- Arranges for substitutes
- Determine Crisis Center(s)

### CRT-Develop a Plan:

- Get updated info.
- Write building announcement.
  - Make it a straightforward announcement of the incident, appropriate to audience. Inform them of “the death of”; do not use euphemisms (“pass away”, “lost”, etc.).
- Meet with all building staff. Assign crisis member to make observations of the more affected faculty.
- Notify other neighboring schools likely to be affected.
- Identify students/staff most affected.
- Make arrangements to inform absent students.
- Have two staff members remove contents from victim’s locker and/or desk and secure in office until turned over to parents. Likewise, remove any accessible personal items of staff member.

### Plan:

- Meet with all staff. Keep information factual.
- Have staff read announcements to students. Have CRT member available to help any staff that needs ‘help’ reading an announcement. Allow students time for discussion – to talk about their feelings. Be sensitive, but keep facts straight regarding the event prominent. Don’t let the situation get ‘gossipy’.
- Follow normal attendance procedures
- Do not dismiss school or cancel classes. Allow students to leave school only with a parent or an adult. **\*\*Monitor doors\*\***
- Follow normal afterschool activity schedule.
- Do not schedule an assembly at all.
- Do not fly a flag at half staff – only the Governor or President can order that flag at half staff.
- If needed, write a letter to parents to send home with all students regarding the incident:
-

- Letter to District Parents
  - Paragraph One: Tell what happened.
  - Paragraph Two: Tell what you are doing about it. Name the Crisis Response Team. \*Use familiar terms.
  - Paragraph Three: Tell parents what they can do to help. \*Encourage parents to attend the funeral with their son/daughter. Students will need a written excuse.
  - Paragraph Four: Provide available information concerning the funeral.
  - Submit letter to principal for editing and signature.
- Notify parents of seriously distraught students.
- Hold a CRT meeting mid-day to review events.
- Hold an all staff meeting at end of day to review status of affected students/make list.

\*\*Inviting clergy and/or mental health professionals into the school building is not recommended. Invite them to open their churches and provide support during nonschool hours. Inform them that the school has a plan to be carried out by trained school personnel.

\*\*In the event of a suicide, or attempted suicide, plan prevention activities to discourage a 'cluster' response.

- Emphasize that suicide is never a good choice.
- Explain where and from whom help is available.
- Inform students/staff/parents of the suicide hotline resources.
- Ask clergy to state that suicide is NOT a way to solve a problem.

In coming days, watch for students/staff who are dealing with a delayed reaction, or are suffering grief issues from transference.

CRT During the Aftermath:

- Deal with the empty desk sensitivity.
- Visit parents or family and express condolences.
- Designate a staff member to collect funeral and/or visitation information.
- Inform students/staff regarding funeral and/or visitation arrangements.
- Advise students to honor the wishes of the parents of the student in relation to attendance at visitations, memorial services, and funeral.
- Inform students/staff of cultural issues.
- Excuse only those students from classes who have permission from their parents to attend the funeral. Advise parents to accompany their children to funerals.
- Provide a lesson for students on appropriate behavior at visitation and/or funeral .

Remember:

- Students need adults to model the grieving process.
- Anniversary dates of the event may cause concerns as long as students and/or staff who were present at the original event remain in the building.
- Students re-grieve at each developmental stage

**Stages of Grief:**

- Shock/Denial
- Anger
- Acceptance
- Recovery
- Reintegration

\*Stages are not discrete/separate entities and can recur or occur in any sequence.

**Memorials:**

Memorials that contain or would cause any of the following to occur may be rejected by the Board of Education:

- Memorials that contain the name and/or picture of the deceased
- Memorials that may alter the routine of a regular school instructional day
- Memorials that require the retirement or discontinued use of school property
- Memorials that require the altering of school property or school publications
- Memorials that require the altering of school activities or the school's activities schedule
- Memorials that infringe on the separation of church and state
- Memorials that require the use of public funds to purchase, develop, or maintain

Acceptable memorial options may include:

- Scholarships established in the names of the students/staff. These are usually acceptable because there is not a permanent display in the school.
- Furniture, equipment, books, or other instructional materials given to the school should either remain unlabeled or, if donor plaques are acceptable to the school district, they should follow specific guidelines, i.e., given in memory of our beloved son, Carl Jones (not acceptable); given by the Harold and Mary Jones' family (acceptable)
- Contributions by students/staff to memorials designated by the family, i.e., cancer society, MADD, or Friend Foundation

**Checklist for a Death in a Student's Immediate Family (Elementary)**

- Verification of death (spouse, parent, hospital, police, sheriff, mortuary)
- Inform the child's teacher(s)
- Plan how to inform the child's classmates and peers
- A visit to the family by appropriate school personnel (teacher, counselor, principal)
- Arrange for a remembrance from the school (food, card, flowers)
- Arrange for appropriate staff to attend services
- Identify people available to help the teacher talk with the student's classmates about the death and how to welcome the student back
- Assess counseling needs for the child when he/she returns to school
- Plan and provide follow-up visit(s) with the family
- Provide student/family with information about community resources as needed

# POTENTIAL SUICIDE CHECKLIST

Suicide threats must always be taken seriously and intervention should be immediate. If a situation is potentially life-threatening, students and staff need to recognize that the issue of confidentiality does not apply.

## What to Do:

- **Do not leave the individual alone.**
- Refer the individual to appropriate staff (administrator, counselor, family specialist) who will do the following:
  - Assess the degree of risk:
    - Ask the student directly if he/she is thinking of suicide.
    - Is there a plan, how specific is it?
    - How lethal is the method?
    - How available is the means?
    - Has there been a previous attempt?
    - Ask about feelings of anger and depression (crying, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, hopelessness).
    - Ask about losses (deaths, family changes, peer relationships).
    - Ask about history of chemical use.
    - Ask whether the student has made final arrangements (giving away of possessions, saying goodbye).

## Intervention Plan:

- Contact student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and plan with them how to help the student.
- Family specialists, police and/or Child Protective Services may need to be involved if parents are unable or unwilling to help.
- Refer parent(s) or guardian(s) to appropriate services from physicians, mental health professionals and/or community agencies.
- Police involvement may be required in situations where the student is assessed to be in immediate danger and parents cannot be located or are unable to help. (School personnel should avoid transporting students in private vehicles).

## Follow Up:

- Complete the "Report of Suicide Risk" form and send to counselor.
- Check to be sure that the student has received/is receiving appropriate services.
- Plan for student's transition back to school.
- Student should have ongoing contact with a counselor or family specialist.
- Brief appropriate staff on student's status.

# REPORT OF SUICIDE RISK

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Notified: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Notification \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Members Involved \_\_\_\_\_

Report Prepared By \_\_\_\_\_

Presenting Problem \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Results of Parental Contact \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up Will Be Done By \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **BUS ACCIDENT**

- Principal and other school personnel need to go to the scene of the accident to identify and comfort students.
- Designated individual needs to be available in the school office to answer inquiries with a written response.
- Media statement needs to be prepared.
- Notify Crisis Team if appropriate (calling tree, page 4).
- Activate Friend calling tree if appropriate (page 5).
- Follow Student or Staff Death outline, if appropriate.

## **INTRUDER IN THE BUILDING**

- First person to notice intruder (person with a weapon or person who is upset or acting out of control) will notify principal or superintendent.
- Principal or his/her representative will sound a preplanned alarm:
  - Friend Building: Intercom Message: “Mr. Green, please report to the office.”
- Teachers should not allow students to leave the classroom and should direct them to be seated on the floor next to an interior wall away from windows and doors. Students should only be allowed to leave the classroom when the all-clear announcement is given or when directed to move to another location by the police.
- Teachers take an accurate count of students.
- Designate personnel to monitor hallways and other areas of the building and to direct students not in class to a safe area.
- Assign a staff member to liaison with police.
- Inform office staff of appropriate information to give to callers.
- Make a list of those being held hostage.
- Refer media contacts to superintendent’s office.
- Plan how to inform families of students and staff directly affected.
- Contact the Crisis Team to assist students and staff in dealing with the aftermath.

## BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

- Upon receipt of a bomb threat, the person receiving the call will attempt to:
  - Prolong the conversation. **DO NOT HANG UP THE PHONE.** (Use another phone to call authorities.)
  - Identify background noises and any distinguishing voice characteristics.
  - Ask the caller for a description of the bomb, where it is, and when it is due to explode.
- The person receiving the threat will notify the principal.
- Alert 911.
- The principal will, in consulting with 911, decide whether to make a preliminary search or to evacuate building.
- The principal will notify the superintendent's office.
- Inform staff and students of the bomb threat and any immediate directions; for example, remain in their rooms until an all-clear is given or directions to evacuate.
- Ask staff to make a visual observation of their classroom/work area and inform them not to open cabinets, doors or move objects. If anything suspicious is found, **DO NOT TOUCH IT!** The bomb can be almost anything from a bundle of dynamite to concealed or ordinary objects (briefcase, toolbox, pieces of pipe, etc.). You will be searching for something that doesn't belong in the classroom/work area.
- Check absentee list and on each absentee from class at the time the threat was received. Account for all students. Check halls and restrooms.
- Ask for volunteers to participate in the search with the police/fire department.
- Meet with police/fire department and search team to decide on the procedure for checking the building.
- If at any time the threat is determined to be valid, use standard fire drill procedures with any necessary modifications to evacuate the building. Evacuate at least 300 feet from the building. Plan for an alternate location if needed due to prolonged search or inclement weather.
- When building is reported to be safe, resume whatever schedule is needed and debrief staff and students.
- If a written threat is received, copy the contents and protect the original message (plastic or other covering) to preserve fingerprints and other identifying marks.
- Use the Bomb Threat Checklist, page 20, to gather helpful information.

## CHEMICAL SPILL/TOXIC FUMES

If spill/fumes occur **outside** the school building:

- Establish contact with administration personnel
- Keep students inside
- Close windows
- Establish contact with police, fire, and health department
- Be prepared to evacuate the building
- If students are outside, move upwind
- Don't step in spilled materials

## EVACUATION/ALTERNATE SCHOOL LOCATIONS

Although it is highly unlikely, some crisis situations may require that school be evacuated and the students be relocated. If emergency personnel determine that the building will be unsafe for some time:

- Notify administrative personnel
- Make arrangements for the transportation of special needs students
- Keep the media informed of evacuation/relocation plans so parents will have accurate information.

Friend students will be escorted to the Catholic Church/Methodist Church (When rebuilt) for check-in and dismissal.

# SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

## FRIEND SCHOOLS

**TO:** Parents and/or Guardians of Friend School Students  
**FROM:** Beth Johnsen, Superintendent of Schools  
**RE:** Emergency Procedures for Friend Schools

The Friend School District has developed a Crisis Response Plan that is designed to minimize danger to anyone occupying a school should an emergency occur. Our main objective is to attend to the health and welfare of your children in the event of a crisis.

**In most emergencies, your children will remain and be cared for at the school he/she attends. In the rare event of an emergency affecting the school your child attends that prohibits re-entry to the building (such as a broken gas or water main, a fire, or toxic chemical spill), elementary students will be escorted to the Methodist Church. Junior and Senior High students will be dismissed to return home for the day.**

We ask that you follow this procedure if you hear of any school emergency:

- **TURN ON YOUR RADIO OR TELEVISION.** We will keep the media informed of any emergency.
- **PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE THE SCHOOL.** We have limited phone lines. These **MUST** be used to respond to the emergency.
- **PLEASE DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL UNLESS REQUESTED TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL.** Any emergency involving your child's school may mean emergency vehicles and workers must be able to get to the building. If the emergency necessitates relocation of staff and students, you will be informed via the media.

*PLEASE GLUE THIS INFORMATION INSIDE THE COVER OF YOUR PHONE BOOK*

## FACILITATION QUESTIONS

If the announcement is made by the classroom teacher, the following facilitation questions may assist the teachers in processing the crisis event with the students. Examples include:

1. I'm having lots of mixed feelings about this. What were your thoughts when you heard the announcement?
  2. Do you plan to talk to adults at home about this? Who are the adults outside of school you can discuss this with?
  3. If you have experienced losses in your own lives, how are you feeling now? Where are places you can go to discuss these feelings?
  4. What can you do to help your classmates at times like this?
- Ask questions and share experiences, ask them if they would like to tell you about it.
  - Talk about how you feel, too. Be human.
  - Note: Most applicable for the elementary setting. Following the death of a student, provide classmates an opportunity to remove some possessions, thus providing closure. Rearrange the seating; keep the student's desk in the room. A crisis team member may follow the schedule of the student, including sitting in the empty desk (five minutes to the whole period). This provides an outlet for the students' feelings, or this may create a dialogue between the two adults.
  - Reminder: Near holidays, when making cards or gifts, remember that some students have two dads and two moms—allow them to include dead parents.

# BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Time \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Do not hang up. Use another phone to call police.

Record the exact words used by the caller:

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Ask:

What time is the bomb set for? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the bomb? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the bomb look like? \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you doing this? \_\_\_\_\_

Who are you? \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluate the voice of the caller:

Man \_\_\_\_\_ Accent \_\_\_\_\_

Woman \_\_\_\_\_ Speech Impediment \_\_\_\_\_

Child \_\_\_\_\_ Intoxicated \_\_\_\_\_

Age (approx.) \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Background noise:

Music \_\_\_\_\_ Conversation \_\_\_\_\_

Children \_\_\_\_\_ Machine Noise \_\_\_\_\_

Typing \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic \_\_\_\_\_

Airplanes \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Person receiving threat will immediately notify the principal.

Call received by \_\_\_\_\_