SECTION 2 - PREVENTION-MITIGATION PROCEDURES

2.1 GENERAL

Mitigation and prevention include actions to eliminate or reduce hazards and their impacts should an emergency occur. This is an ongoing process, needing constant monitoring and updating. Any school or site emergency plan should include actions that need to be taken on an ongoing basis to ensure that schools and other district sites as safe as possible and that supplies are kept current and in sufficient numbers.

Mitigation involves assessment of factors that might come into play with respect to these hazards and then working to lessen or remove the threat.

Emergency Coordinators at school and non-school sites should coordinate regular assessments identifying hazards to be mitigated, and assessing and reducing other risks.

2.1.1   Hazard Categories

There are four categories of hazard:

a) Natural

Arising from events such as severe weather, earthquakes or naturally-occurring floods.

b) Human-Caused

Arising from a deliberate, intentional act to threaten or harm others including fire, active shooter, dangerous intruder or bomb threats.

c) Technological

Arising from the result of technological or industrial accidents, infrastructure failure or certain human activities which do not result from an intention to harm, including such events as mill explosions, train derailments, water contamination from pesticides or fertilizers, power failure, chemical leak or gas leak.

d) Biological

Arising from contaminated food or water, communicable or infectious diseases.

2.1.2   Site Hazard Assessment and Reduction

a) The evaluation of District facilities and school structures and the integrity of their attachments in the event of natural disasters started in 1988 by Facilities Branch and continue to this day.

b) Each school/site Occupational Health & Safety Committee should conduct an annual assessment identifying potential hazards in and around the building which could result in the event of an earthquake and put into perspective those which can be eliminated, reduced or only anticipated. Examples of actions that can be

taken include securing large pieces of furniture to the walls, securing hazardous chemicals in locked cabinets, and ensuring clear building access and egress for all.

c) **The site hazard assessment must be completed before students arrive in September**. A sample checklist are included in **Appendix E-1** which, when completed, should be kept in the school's/site's Emergency Plan Binder.

2.1.3   Culture and Climate Assessment

This assessment involves taking steps to reduce the probability of violent incidents that are instigated from within the school community. By determining the overall tone of the school through a student and staff survey one can, if improvement is needed, work to create an environment in which students are more likely to succeed, feel safe and report threats.

By making the effort to ensure that every student has at least one adult in the school who knows them well and with whom they feel a connection, a school can build a strong, resilient and connected community which can go a long way to preventing the threat of, or actual acts, of violence. The Expect Respect And a Safe Education (ERASE) training provides more information on this subject.

2.1.4   Threat Assessment

This assessment is a multi-disciplinary process used by school and district staff to investigate specific behaviours, for example threats to harm self or others. Direct threats of harm or even information that someone may be exhibiting worrisome behaviours or could be a danger can lead to a threat assessment being initiated.

The school and district can activate a threat assessment to determine the level of concern/ threat and then respond accordingly. Detailed procedures are contained in **Appendix O – Crisis Response Protocol**.

2.1.5   Capacity Assessment

a) This assessment is intended to ensure that:

- staff roles and responsibilities have been appropriately assigned;

- relevant documents are compiled and stored in both hard and soft copy;

- sufficient and appropriate resources including food, medicines, water, blankets, etc. have been purchased, inventoried, and stored; and

- equipment is supplied and inventoried.

b) **The annual school emergency preparedness report, which is a checklist of items included in the capacity assessment, must be completed and submitted to the Superintendent's Office by October 15th each school year.** This report, as well as the emergency container checklist, is included in **Appendix E-1** which, when completed, should be kept in the school's/site's Emergency Plan Binder.