

Family Reunification

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Purpose: *The Family Reunification Protocol is used to ensure a safe and secure means of accounting for students and reuniting parents/guardians with their children whenever the child care facility or grounds is rendered unsafe and a remote site is needed.*

Materials needed:

- Radios/pagers
- Cell phones
- Clipboards
- Paper
- Pens
- Markers
- Rosters of students and staff
- Child Care Center Enrollment Form (Medical and Emergency Contacts)
- Yellow Caution tape or portable plastic construction fencing
- Reunification Forms

Principal and/or Designee:

- Designate a Reunification Site Commander (use vest).
- Request the additional personnel to staff the Family Reunification Center. Emergency Management/Emergency Responders maybe able to assist with this function.
- Notify the contact person at the relocation site to prepare for arrival of students.
- Implement MEDIA protocol.

Reunification Site Commander:

- Ensure that every student's parent/guardian is notified of reunification site. This may be done through a combination of media releases, phone calls, and mass electronic communication. Teachers may be directed to call the parents of their students. Foreign language translators may be directed to assist with parent communications as needed.
- Provide the Verification Team a list of parents who need to report to the Notification Room.
- Organize a Crisis Intervention Team which will report to the reunification site. Use them to calm waiting parents/guardians and explain that an orderly process is required for the safety of the students.
- Check identification of all non-uniformed personnel who arrive to assist.
- Secure a holding area for arriving students and staff away from waiting family members.
- Set up an adult report area for parents/guardians to sign-in and to check identification.
- Set up a student release area where students will be escorted to meet their parent/guardian and sign out.
- Set up a Notification Room and direct staff to escort parent/guardian of any injured, missing or deceased student to the area for staff to provide notification in private away from other parents.
- Keep students on buses or in a holding area separate from parents until authorization to release is given.
- Only release students to authorized persons after checking proof of identity and signing a student reunification form.
- Instruct parents/guardians to leave the site once they have signed out their student.
- Students and parents/guardians will be notified of the reunification procedures in advance.

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Teachers

- Provide a list of students to the reunification site staff upon arrival.
- Ensure special needs students and staff are assisted. Request help if needed.
- Follow the instructions of the Family Reunification Center staff when you arrive. You may be asked to assist in staffing the site.

Double Gate System. The reunification team will be using the double gate system. Staff will be located in two areas. The first area, the "holding area," will be where students can wait for their parents. The second area will include both the "report point" and the "student release point" where adult care givers will report and wait for their students to join them. These will be two distinctly separate areas, but they will be in close proximity to one another. Volunteer assistants, if available, will be utilized to increase staffing and to improve the communications capabilities.

Holding Area Operation. Designated classroom teachers will remain with their assigned students in the holding area. Each will have the list of the students assigned to their supervision, including the exact name of their parents/guardians including home, cell and work numbers as provided. Anyone who was absent at the start of the school day or who departed prior to the incident will be noted. At the end of the incident, designated personnel will call all those parents/guardians who have not yet picked up their child(ren).

Release Point Operation. When a parent/guardian arrives at the release point, s/he will be asked for the name of the student(s) being picked up and will be required to complete the Student Reunification Form. The parent/guardian will be required to show photo identification. When the staff member confirms the parent's/guardian's identity and authority to pick up the student (by looking at the Child Care Center Enrollment Form), the staff member will use a runner to notify the team member in the "Student Holding Area" that the designated student(s) are to be escorted to the release point. When the student(s) reports to the release point, the staff member will have the parent/guardian sign for the student(s) on Student Reunification Form and the student(s) are released.

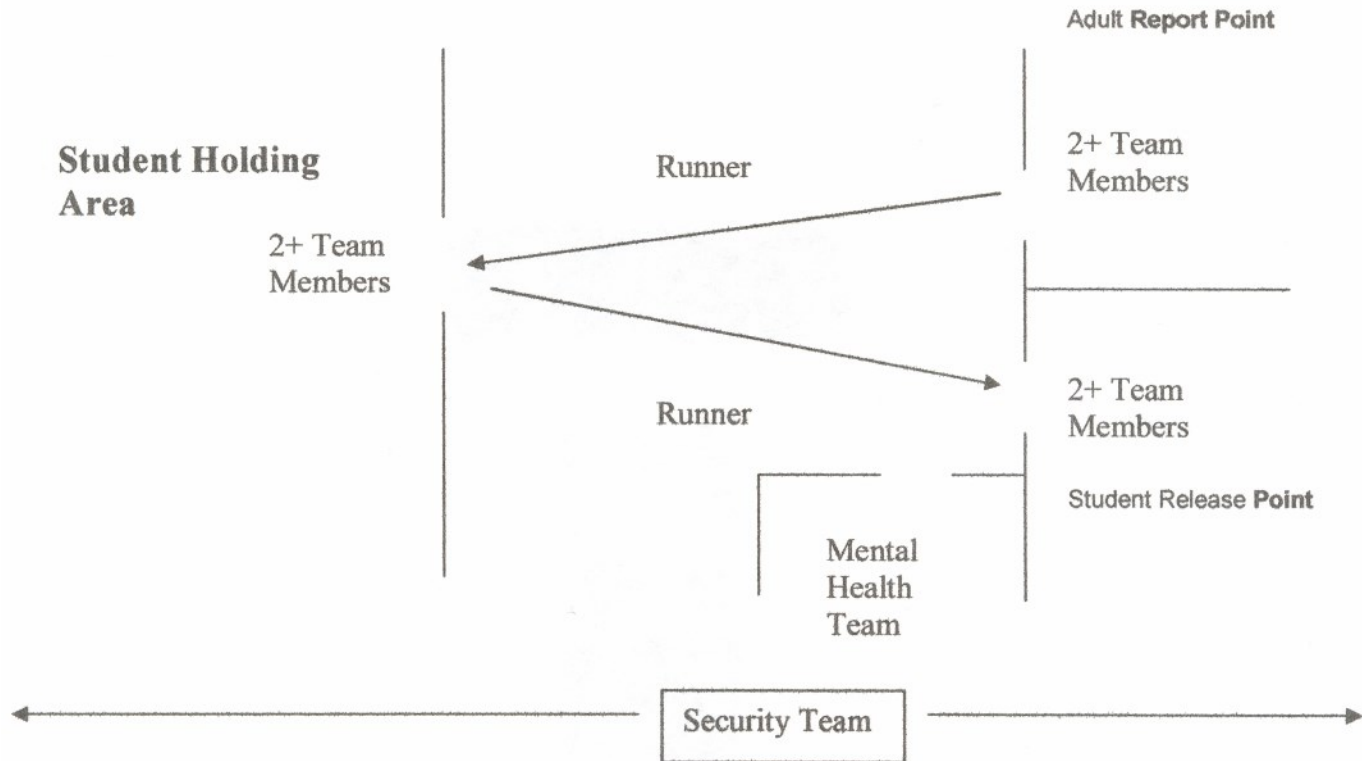
If the parent/guardian must be notified that their child(ren) have been injured or for some other reason are not available for release, the staff member at the release point **will not** indicate the status of the child but will ask the parent to report to a nearby room for further processing. The "notification room(s)" will be manned by members of the Crisis Intervention Team.

Notification Room Operation. Members of the Crisis Intervention Team will be responsible for notifying parents that their child is not available for pick-up and why.

The Crisis Intervention Team member will:

- Provide available information regarding the child(ren) in a sensitive way.
- Will assure the parent/guardian that everything possible is being done to safeguard their child or their child's remains.
- Will inform the parent/guardian where they are to await further information about how they will be reunited with their child(ren).
- Will assist the parent/guardian with their trauma.
- Will make available to the parent/guardian means for communicating with other family members and supporters.
- Will shelter the parent/guardian from media representatives.

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The double-gated system to be utilized when laying out the Parent Reunification Site as depicted above. The adult picking up a student will report to the "Adult Report Point" who will be greeted by members of the Verification Team at the main entrance.

The Verification Team will provide the adult a copy of the "Student Reunification Form" (see below), asking the adult to complete the first section. A Verification Team member will then confirm the identity of the adult utilizing picture identification and confirm that the adult is listed on the Child Care Center Enrollment Form. A Verification Team Member will then complete the second section of the "Student Reunification Form" and hand it to a Runner to be carried to the Student Holding Area.

If the parent/guardian must be notified that their child(ren) have been injured or for some other reason are not available for release, the staff member at the release point **will not** indicate the status of the child but will ask the parent to report to a nearby room for further processing.

--- OR ---

The adult will be asked to go to the "Student Release Point". The Runner will deliver the "Student Reunification Form" and the student to a member of the Release Team. A Release Team Member will then record that the student has been released on the "Student Release Form".

A copy of full student rosters should be used by both the Verification Team and Release Team to maintain a list of those students who have been released. Classroom teachers should all record which students have been taken from their supervision by a Runner.

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STUDENT REUNIFICATION FORM

Please Print

Name of Student _____

Teacher _____ Grade _____

Requested By _____

To be filled in by Verification Team Member

Proof of I.D. ____ YES ____ NO Name on Enrollment Form ____ YES ____ NO

(After identification verification, give this form to a Runner.)

Teachers must maintain their own documentation of which students they have released to Runners.

To be filled in by Release Team Member

Released by (signature) _____ Time _____

To be filled in by Requester at the Student Release Point

Requester Signature _____

Once this form is completed, the student may leave with the requester.

A Release Team Member will keep all completed Student Reunification Forms.