



# SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS 2024 | ANNUAL REPORT



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

[Email the School Preparedness team.](#)

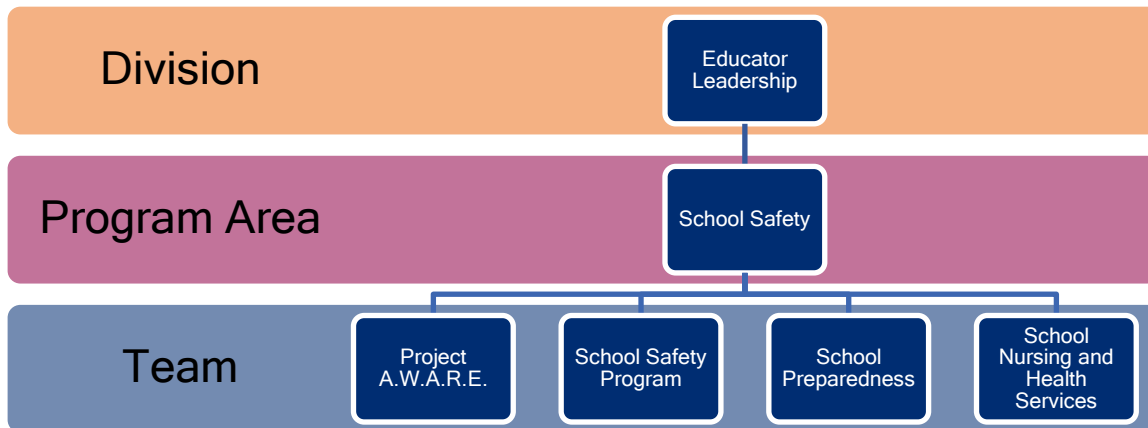
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction _____	3
Stakeholder Engagement _____	4
Arizona School Emergency Planning Legislation and Guidance _____	5
Current Events _____	5
School Safety Audit _____	5
Looking Ahead _____	5
Minimum Requirements for Schools _____	5
Guidance Document Revisions _____	6
School Preparedness Advisory Council _____	11
School Emergency Supply Funding Allocation _____	12
Events _____	14
Exercises _____	14
Conference Presentations _____	16
Regional School Safety Consortia _____	16
Trainings _____	17
Partners _____	21

# INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Department of Education’s School Preparedness team is housed within the Educator Leadership Division, under the School Safety program area.



School Preparedness is funded through the **Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR)’s Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP)** funding initiative. Since 2017, this funding has offered Arizona schools valuable resources and opportunities to *strengthen critical partnerships with local and statewide emergency responders, law enforcement, healthcare entities, and offices of emergency management.*

During the 2023-2024 school year (Fiscal Year 2024), the School Preparedness team was awarded \$225,000 to support emergency preparedness initiatives in Arizona public schools.

**We welcome you to read through this report to learn more about the emergency preparedness activities that occurred during the 2023-2024 school year.** The purpose of this report is *to inform Arizona’s community of schools, safety planners, stakeholders, students, and families of the various approaches the School Preparedness team engages for the promotion of effective, inclusive school emergency planning.*

## Stakeholder Engagement

The School Preparedness team often calls on partner agencies, organizations, and associations to build programming that supports the broader Arizona education community.

Arizona Association of School Psychologists (AASP)

Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA)

Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)

Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council (AZSILC)

Coyote Crisis Collaborative (CCC)

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

The Arizona School Risk and Retention Trust (The Trust)

Arizona Coalition for Healthcare Emergency Response (AzCHER)

Arizona School Counselors Association (ASCA)

Arizona School Administrators, Inc. (ASA)

*We extend our deep gratitude to all the partners that have joined us in committing to keeping Arizona school communities safe.*

# ARIZONA SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLANNING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

## Recent Legislative Updates

Arizona Senate Bill 1315 (enacted in 2023) dictates that any emergency response plan developed pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-341(a)(31) must address how the school and emergency responders will communicate with and provide assistance to students with disabilities.

## Current Events

### School Safety Audit

In December 2023, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) directed the Office of the Arizona Auditor General to conduct a multi-year series of special audits to review elements of school safety and emergency response best practices, including:

- Emergency response practices and plans.
- Physical safety infrastructure and multimedia data communication systems.
- School safety interoperability fund.
- Other areas relating to school emergency response and preparedness as deemed appropriate by the Auditor General and approved by JLAC.

The first year of the audit evaluates school emergency operations plans. Schools either volunteered or were selected, and the aggregate findings will be published by December 31, 2024.

## Looking Ahead

### Minimum Requirements for Schools

The State Minimum Requirements for Schools are revised on a five-year cycle. The School Preparedness team has begun soliciting feedback from stakeholders on the 2019 iteration of published minimum requirements. This will prepare ADE for upcoming discussions with the Arizona DEMA to revise the requirements. The updated requirements will be released during the 2024-2025 school year.

## Guidance Document Revisions

Recent stakeholder conversations have revolved around updating the following guidance documents provided by the ADE:

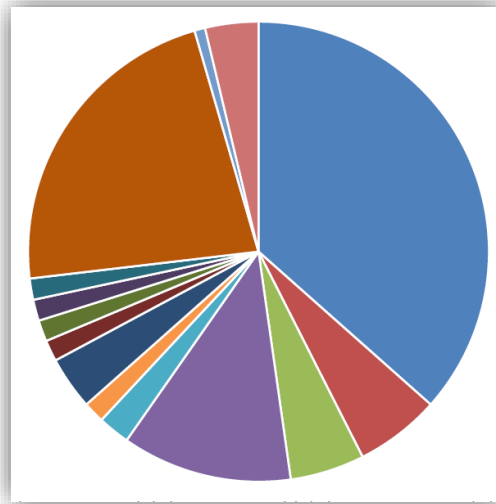
1. EOP Basic Plan Guidance
2. EOP Basic Plan Template
  - Include considerations when planning for students with disabilities and access and functional needs (DAFN).
  - Include the role of nurses, unlicensed health office staff, and special educators when supporting students with DAFN.
3. Drills and Exercises Guidance Document
  - Include implementation guidance.
4. Individualized Emergency Safety Plan
  - Include considerations for how school staff will provide assistance to students with DAFN.

The School Preparedness team revised the guidance documents to incorporate recommendations from valued stakeholders:

1. Subject Matter Expert Review Committee
  - Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, a team of subject matter experts in the field of special education conducted a review of the Arizona Department of Education school emergency planning documents. The review provided suggestions for the improvement of current guidance to be inclusive of populations with special needs.
2. School Access and Functional Needs Workgroup
  - The work group consisted of the ADHS, the Trust, AzSILC, CCC, the Arizona Center for Disability Law, and parents. Various school district leadership, educators, and safety planners joined these calls to present their experience with emergencies and discuss how they planned to account for the safety of all students and staff.
3. June 5, 2023, Targeted Event Readiness Forum
  - A total of 134 participants discussed an active shooter scenario through the lens of whole community response to a school incident. Community partners

and responding agencies were targeted based on their level of involvement with school emergency planning.

Attendee	Number
Urban School	49
Rural School	8
Tribal School	7
Private School	16
Charter School	3
Parent	2
Fire	5
Police	2
Emergency Management	2
Tribal Emergency Management	2
Legal	2
State Dept/Assoc	30
Federal Agency	1
Other	5
Total	134



Key	
Urban School	
Rural School	
Tribal School	
Private School	
Charter School	
Parent	
Fire	
Police	
Emergency Management	
Tribal Emergency Management	
Legal	
State Department/Association	
Federal Agency	
Other	

The considerations that arose from this forum include:

**A. Partnerships with Purpose:**

1. Establish working relationships among schools, districts, law enforcement, fire, and local emergency managers as referenced in the EOP template.
2. Share Individualized Emergency Safety Plans (IESPs) with local fire departments and law enforcement, particularly pertaining to students requiring medical attention from school nurses during disaster response.
3. Encourage first responders to receive training in how to interact with and assist students with special needs.
4. Discuss the equipment and medication needs of students with access and functional needs during an evacuation or lockdown. Coordinate with local law enforcement and responding agencies to identify strategies for maintaining critical supplies with the student.

5. Explore partnerships with local healthcare providers who can offer guidance during emergencies.

### **B. Health Office and Go Kit Guidance:**

1. Develop plans for ensuring that student medications are accessible to them in the event of a school evacuation or lockdown. One designated person – such as a nurse – is insufficient to accomplish the task as this person may be incapacitated, ill, not on-site, or unable to reach one or more of the students.
2. Examine the prospect of the IEP team creating a separate Individual Emergency Safety Plan (IESP) to include detailed information about a student's medical condition, required medications, medication delivery times, other regimens, equipment, emergency contacts, specific instructions for emergencies, skill deficits that may impact the student's ability to participate or maintain safety during an emergency.
3. Establish practices to include necessary items for the population served in Go Bags.
4. Explore the use of coolers or icepacks for storing certain medications.
5. Consider having duplicates of commonly used health office items in Go Bags. Clearly mark and conduct routine inspections of emergency equipment and supplies to ensure shelf life.
6. Address strategies that promote and fund the practice of ensuring one nurse is assigned to every school.

### **C. Drills and Training**

1. Coordinate opportunities for designated school and district special education staff to attend Incident Command System (ICS) training to ensure familiarity with the ICS and terminology.
2. Hold drills in accordance with the state minimum requirements, assuring that all students and classrooms should be included. Vary the days and times to allow for continued development and assessment.
3. Look at charging radios for disaster communications daily in classroom procedures. Consider testing the communication tools monthly. Special



education teachers and classroom staff should have access to radios and be taught how to use them.

4. Cross-training school staff in Stop-the-Bleed, suctioning, operation of medical equipment, and other practices which may be needed for students with complex medical needs and mobility devices during a disaster.
5. Train back-up personnel who can step in and provide medical support to complex medical needs students in the absence of a school nurse in preparation for an evacuation/extended lockdown. Discuss processes established for the absence of a nurse with guardians and exercise the strategies employed for the lack of nursing presence at a school during a disaster.
6. Reach out to various experts and resources to explore the topic of announced versus unannounced drills to determine what is best for your district. Social stories may prove viable in helping with the student acclimation.

#### **D. Specific DAFN Considerations**

1. Explore integration of a special education representative on regular district/school safety planning team meetings.
2. Consider extreme weather as it relates to the students' medical needs.
3. Develop plans to ensure communication devices sent with students who depend upon these are the equipment with which the students are familiar.
4. Explore the use of standardized symbols used with students for consistency.
5. Determine how to configure a 1:1 ratio for student evacuation as required by the disability. Consider assigning non-special education staff to special education classrooms for support and promotion of prescribed ratio. Avoid using student buddy systems in emergency response actions.
6. Pre-determine evacuation routes and locations, including alternatives, and considering the safety of students and staff, including students with access and functional needs. Explore using a separate access/egress for students with access and functional needs in evacuation plans for specialized transportation.

7. Purchase and store med sleds or evacuation chairs on every floor accessed by the students during a normal school day. Avoid leaving students in “safety areas”. Schools, fire, and law enforcement have no way of determining the time it may take to reach the student and meet the needs of the student during the emergency.
8. Create cozy corners away from windows and doors to calm students.
9. Allocate school funding for students with access and functional needs for emergencies. Explore additional legislative, grant, foundation, or other funding streams to secure the funds that may be needed.
10. Hold a conference/regional meeting on laws impacting emergency planning for students and staff with disabilities or access and functional needs/complex medical needs.

# SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The purpose of the School Preparedness Advisory Council (SPAC) is to *provide input on activities and strategies related to the promotion of high-quality LEA and school emergency operations plans (EOPs) to the ADE School Safety Unit.* The Council consists of school representatives from Northern, Southern, Western, Central, and Tribal regions of Arizona, as well as professionals from nonprofits, healthcare, and emergency management.

The SPAC convened on September 29th and December 1st to discuss priority topics of school safety and preparedness. At the first meeting, the SP team updated the group on changes at ADE and activities that were completed over the summer that stemmed from SPAC guidance. Additionally, they identified the topics of interest and concern for the 2023-2024 school year. These topics ranged from implementation to school climate issues and information sharing on threat trends. On December 1st, the group discussed challenges with implementation of accommodating the needs of students and staff with AFN. Additionally, they discussed when and how EOP revisions should be conducted following an incident. Finally, the group discussed revisions to ADE's training and exercise document from 2015.

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the SPAC met to discuss the following topics: opportunities and additions to a mental health annex in ADE's EOP Template, challenges in school threat assessment, and current trends in social media, such as cyberbullying and threats. To conclude the year, the SPAC convened on May 24th to finalize edits to the "Drills and Exercises: Guidance for Schools" document and confirmed suggested changes to the Arizona Minimum Requirements for Schools. The comments of this meeting, along with the cumulative concerns raised throughout the year, guided the School Preparedness Team's summer work to draft a revised version of the Arizona Minimum Requirements for Schools.

# SCHOOL EMERGENCY SUPPLY FUNDING ALLOCATION

In January 2024, the School Preparedness Team announced the “School Emergency Supply Funding Opportunity” to districts and charter schools across the state. This opportunity was created in response to persisting issues of school health offices and school preparedness efforts being underfunded and lacking critical emergency response equipment. Eligible entities could apply for up to \$2,000 to support their campus’s emergency preparedness efforts, and applications were reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

In total, 32 campuses across Arizona received a total of \$46,671 to support their health office preparedness and overall emergency preparedness efforts.

The counties served include Navajo, Pima, Maricopa, and Yuma. Examples of supplies procured through this allocation include:

- Supplies for Stop the Bleed Kits (e.g., tourniquets, chest seals, QuickClot)
- Health office equipment and supplies
- Evacuation equipment for students and staff with disabilities and others with access and functional needs
- Wheelchairs
- Supplies for individual, classroom, and campus Go-Kits and Shelter Kits

The available funding for this opportunity proved to be insufficient as the School Preparedness Team was only able to fulfill **7%** of application requests. Based on the overwhelming demand that was exhibited during the application process, the School Preparedness Team partnered with the Arizona School Nurse Access Program to create the Arizona School Nurse Workforce and Equipment grant in Grants Management Enterprise. This opportunity, made available through one-time funding of \$1.3 million, provided funding to support the needs of registered nurses for safe and supportive schools that foster student academic success and support during COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Applicants procured the following:

- Equipment for the school health office
- Health office supplies (stop the bleed kits, PPE, items for emergency go bags).

- Professional development and training opportunities (conferences, train the trainer opportunities, related training curriculum in school nursing, mental health, emergency preparedness, or other related topics, NASN books, etc.).
- Staff time to receive workforce development if it occurs outside of contract hours.
- Conference registration and travel fees
- Professional state and national memberships

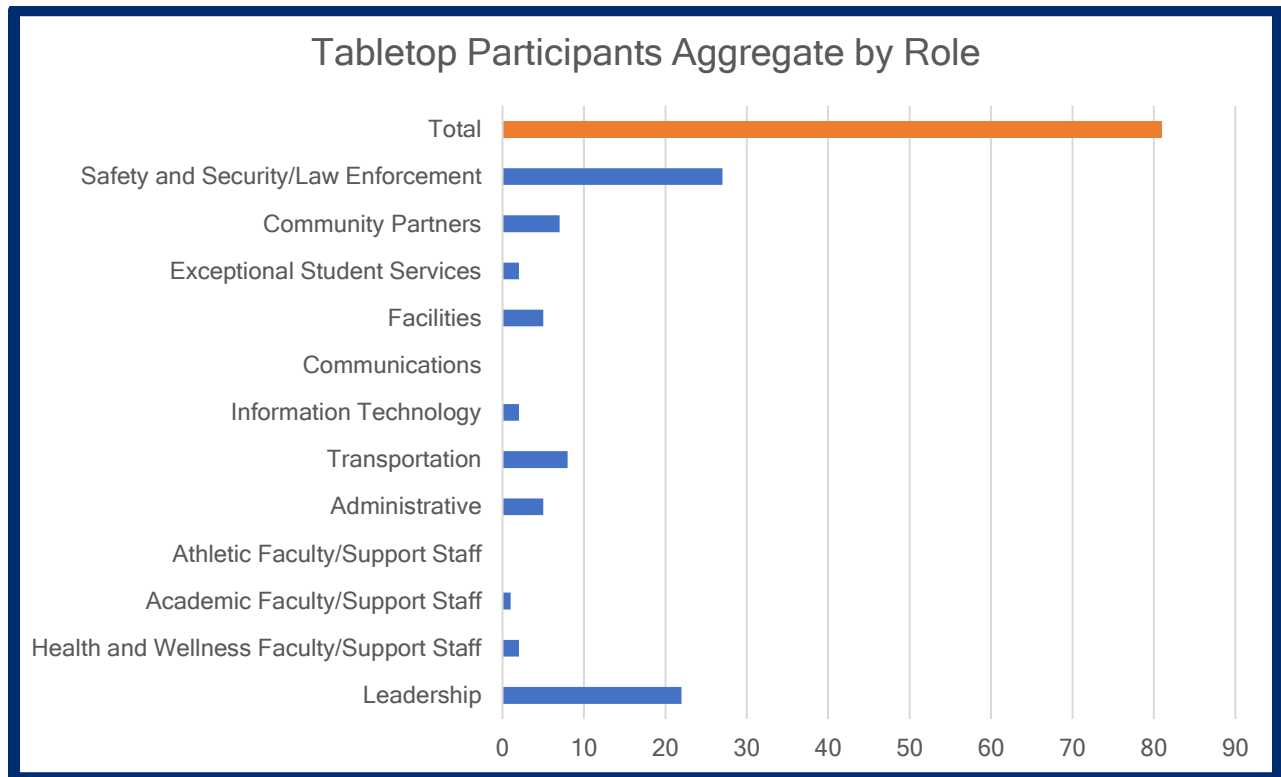
# EVENTS

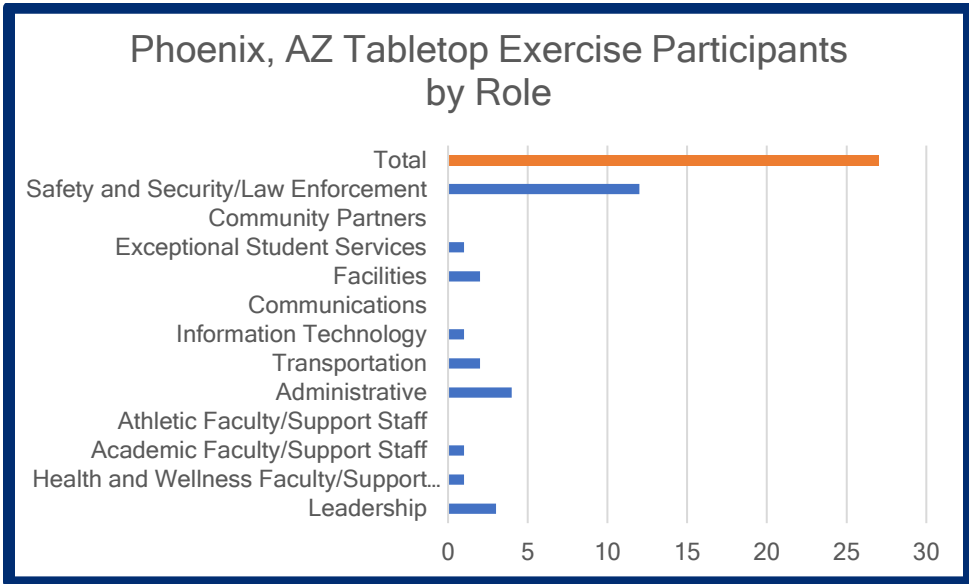
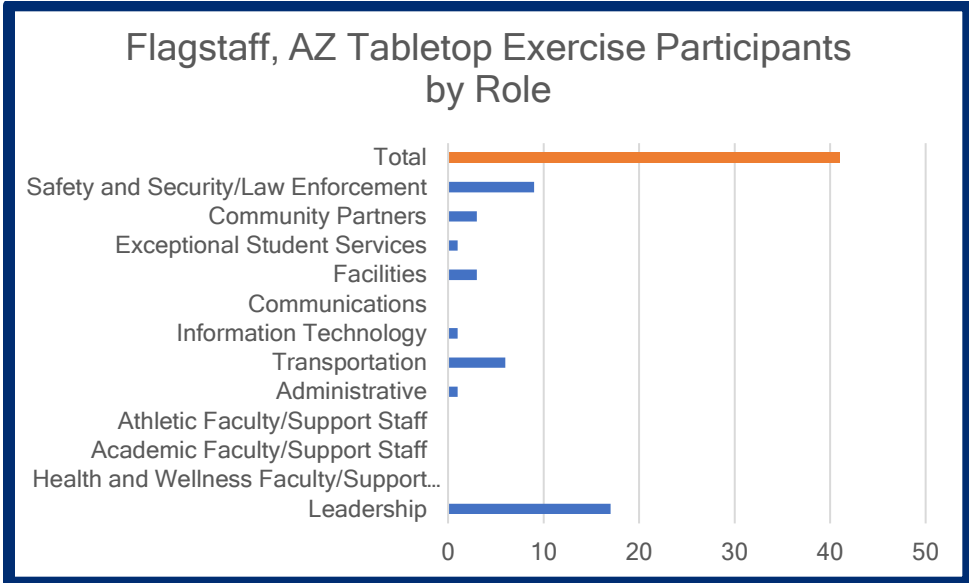
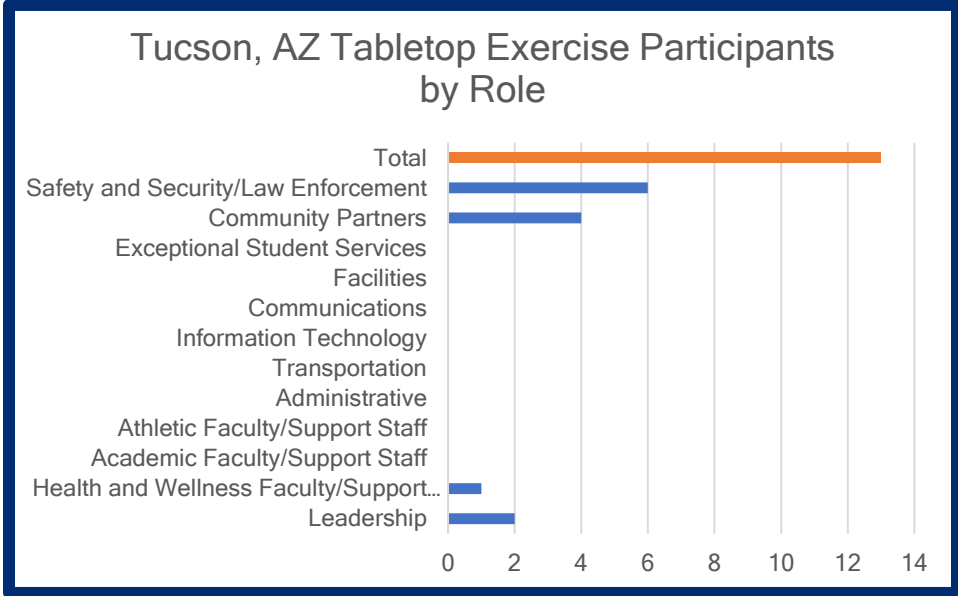
The ADE School Preparedness team participated in and conducted various trainings, exercises, and meetings during the 2023-2024 school year.

## Exercises

### **Regional Family Reunification Tabletop Exercises**

The School Preparedness team conducted three regional tabletop exercises during the 2023-2024 school year. Through these tabletop exercises, the School Preparedness team reached three regions (Northern Arizona, Central Arizona, and Southern Arizona). 81 school staff from varying roles participated in the tabletop exercises.





## **Conference Presentations**

### **IDEA Conference**

On August 22, 2023, the School Preparedness team presented on inclusive emergency planning practices for Arizona schools. Approximately 90 conference attendees, consisting of special education teachers and administrators, school nurses, school safety professionals, and parent advocates, attended the presentation.

### **Regional School Safety Consortia**

Each school year, the School Preparedness team attends quarterly school safety and preparedness consortia hosted by The Trust. The six meetings account for West, East, and Central Valley (greater Phoenix area), Northern Arizona (Flagstaff, AZ), Western Arizona (Yuma, AZ), and Southern Arizona (Tucson, AZ). These meetings consist of school safety professionals presenting on *novel safety strategies, challenges, and recent happenings throughout the state or nation*.

Conversations during the 2023-2024 school year included:

- school-based threat assessment
- swatting calls
- teen violence
- conducting site assessments.

In November 2023, the School Preparedness team presented to the West Valley consortium about the recently published Arizona District and School Emergency Preparedness and Response Competencies and the outcomes from the June 5, 2023, School Targeted Event Readiness Forum.

In January 2024, the School Preparedness team engaged the regional school safety consortia members in providing feedback and suggestions for improvement to the Arizona Minimum Requirements for Schools.



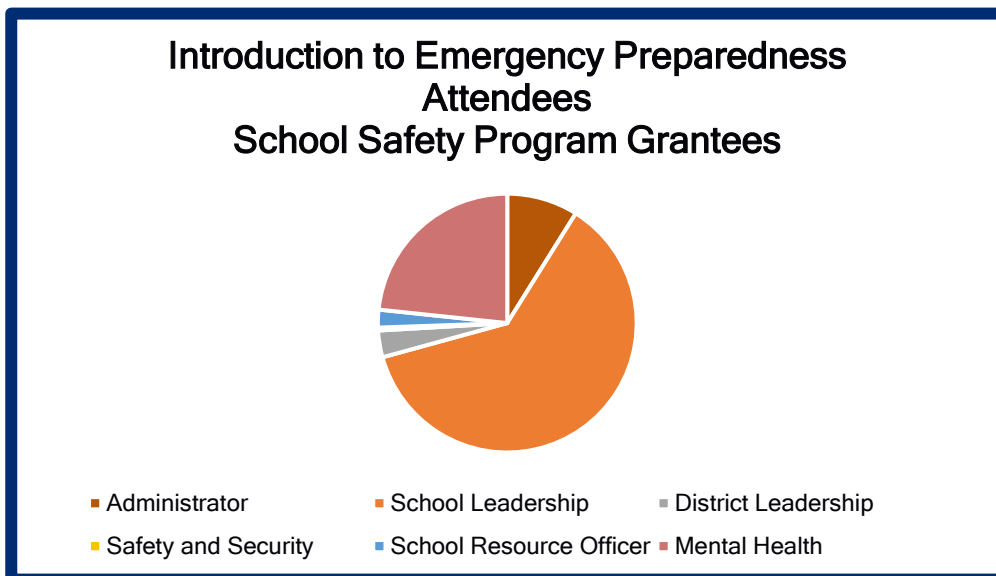
## Trainings

### **Emergency Preparedness: Practical Applications for School Nurses**

To promote overall school preparedness, the School Preparedness team engages school nurses and unlicensed health office personnel through trainings on emergency preparedness in schools. The topics discussed in this training included school emergency planning, how school health office personnel can apply their skillsets to emergency preparedness initiatives, and contents of classroom go-kits. 100 school health office staff participated in the live webinar, and 76 viewed the recorded session.

### **School Safety Program Advanced Course – An Introduction to Emergency Preparedness**

Current veteran grantees under the School Safety Program attended training on “An Introduction to School Emergency Preparedness” to remain in compliance with grant requirements. The School Preparedness team trained school resource officers, administrators, counselors and social workers in six training sessions. The trainings occurred virtually on January 16, January 29, February 12, and February 21, March 26, and April 8, 2024. In total, 207 school professionals from districts participating in the School Safety Program attended these offerings.

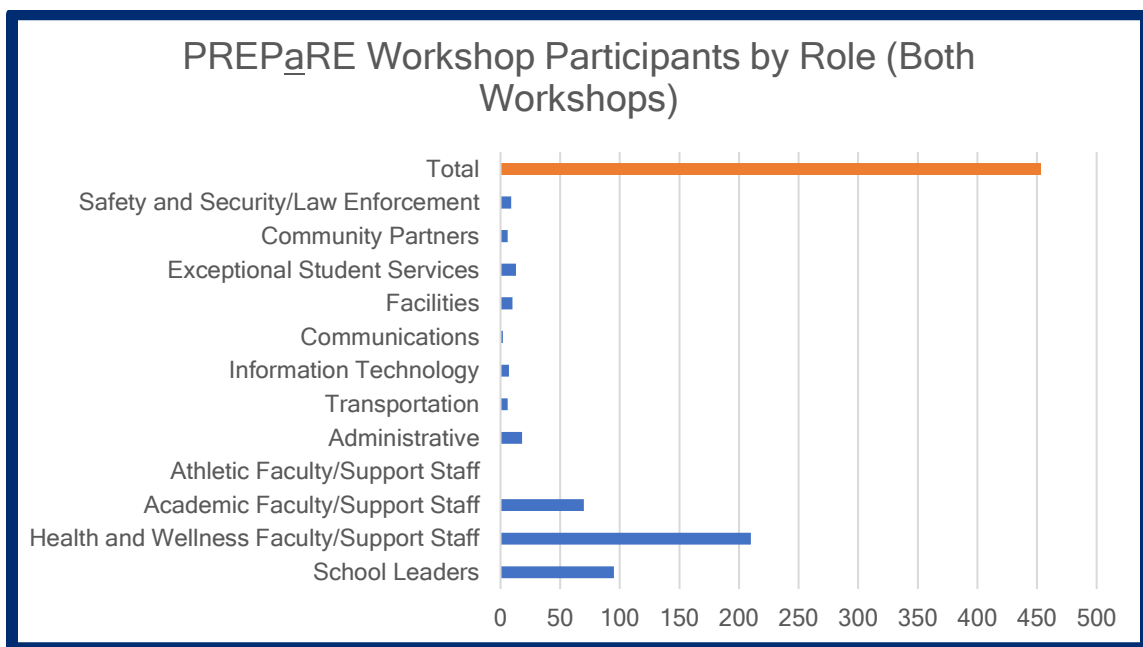


## Developing High Quality K-12 Emergency Operations Plans and SITE ASSESS Extension

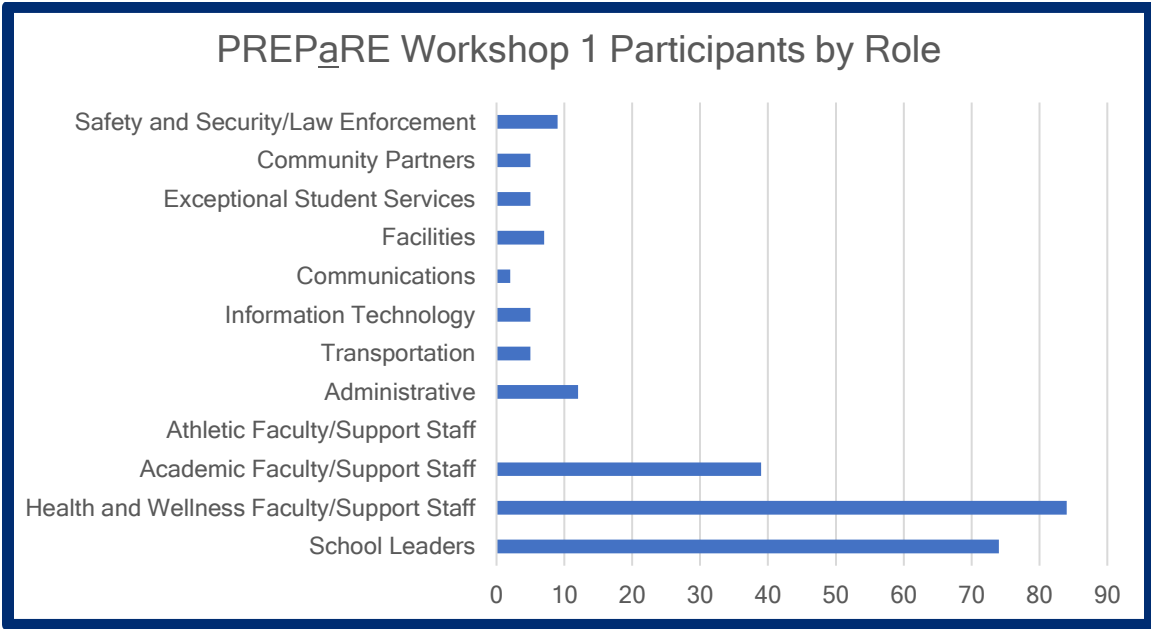
The U.S. Department of Education’s Readiness and Emergency Management in Schools Technical Assistance Center cadre trainers traveled to Arizona to conduct two regional trainings for school professionals. The first session occurred on February 9, 2024, in Phoenix, AZ. The second session occurred on May 7, 2024, in Flagstaff, AZ. In total, 45 school staff attended the February 9th session at the Pendergast Learning Center. In total, 21 school staff from primarily safety and security, transportation, and school/district administration attended the May 7th session at the Flagstaff Family Resource Center.

### The PREPaRE Model

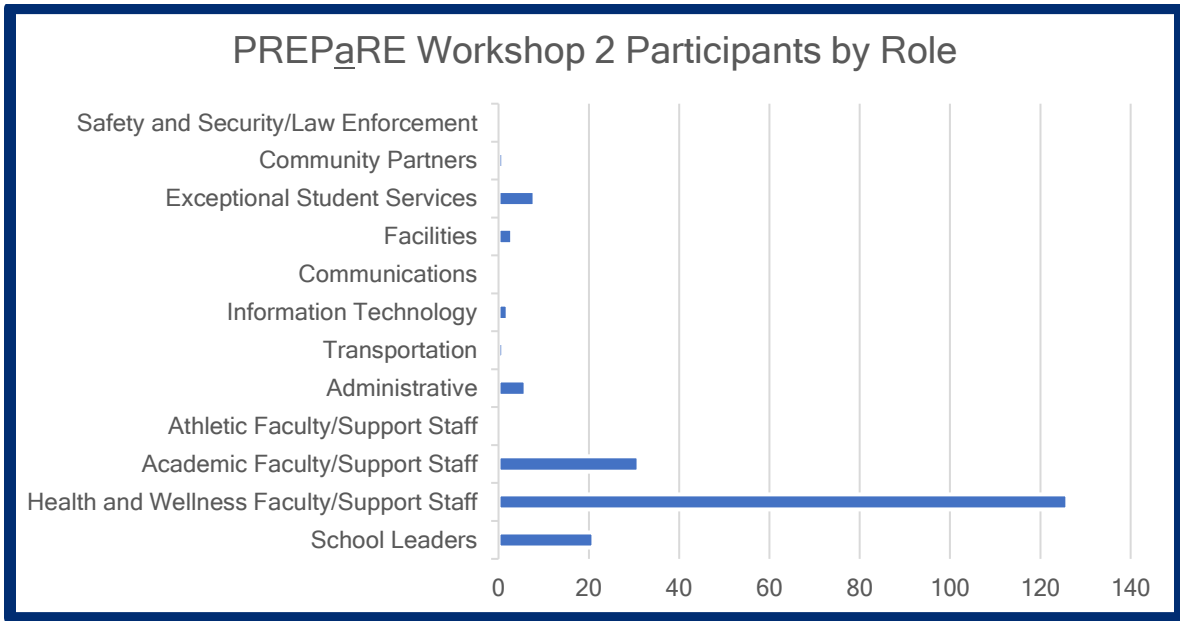
In partnership with the ADE’s Project A.W.A.R.E. team, School Preparedness coordinated PREPaRE Model training for school districts throughout Arizona. Project A.W.A.R.E. funding covered participant material fees and trainer fees associated with these trainings. In the 2023-2024 school year, over 600 multidisciplinary school staff representing local education agencies in seven Arizona counties attended training in the PREPaRE Model.



Through 12 PREPaRE Workshop 1 sessions, 348 school professionals received training in comprehensive emergency operations planning which accounts for both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.



Through 12 PREPaRE Workshop 2 sessions, 298 school professionals received training in how to provide for the psychological needs of students and staff members in the immediate aftermath of a crisis impacting the school community.



### **Stop the Bleed trainings**

The School Preparedness Team partnered with ICSAVE to offer Stop the Bleed training opportunities to school personnel during the 2023-2024 school year. The sessions occurred on October 23, 2023, November 6, 2023, and December 11, 2023. A total of 80 individuals

from various organizations, including schools and community partners, became Stop the Bleed trained through the three in-person sessions.

### **School Threat Management Coaching Session**

In April 2024, Dennis Albaugh led a coaching session on the discernment and management of threats made to or within the school community. The **primary topics of the presentation** included *(1) how to discern credible threats made in a school community, (2) who to involve in the threat management process, and (3) case management to ensure that continuous support is provided to the individual who poses a threat.*

During the latter half of the session, participants engaged in peer-to-peer support with other attendees, while Mr. Albaugh remained online to provide coaching or answer questions where requested. The **primary topics discussed** in the session include Arizona's Parents' Bill of Rights (A.R.S. § 1.602), providing support to students with disabilities and access and functional needs during threat management, and how to organize case documentation. 14 attendees from 11 organizations, including Education Service Agencies, public school districts, and charters, participated in this coaching session.

### **Suicide Prevention and Intervention Trainings**

In partnership with the ADE Project A.W.A.R.E. team, School Preparedness coordinated suicide prevention and crisis intervention trainings that meet the legislative requirements for A.R.S. § 15-120 in partnership with Project AWARE. In total, 1,294 school nurses, counselors, social workers, and psychologists received training. The trainings offered include Youth Mental Health First Aid, SafeTALK, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), and QPR.

# PARTNERS

## School Partners

The work of the ADE School Preparedness Team would not be possible without our most critical partners—schools. A number of school partners engaged in professional development, technical assistance, and emergency preparedness exercises during the 2023-2024 school year.

Abbie School	Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology
Academy of Tucson High School	Chandler Unified School District
Academies of Math and Science	Chicanos Por La Causa
Acorn Montessori	Chinle Unified School District
Agua Fria Union High School District	Chino Valley Unified School District
Alhambra Elementary School District	Cobre Valley Institute of Technology
Amphitheater Public Schools	Coconino County Regional Accommodation School District
Apache Elementary School District	Colegio Petite Arizona
Arete Preparatory Academy	Colorado River Union High School District
Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc.	Compass Points International, Inc.
Arizona Charter Academy	Concho Elementary School District
Arizona State School for the Deaf and Blind	Continental Elementary School District
Arizona Virtual Tech Academy	Coolidge Unified School District
Ash Fork School District	Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District
ASU Preparatory Academy	Crane Elementary School District
Avondale Elementary School District	Creighton Elementary School District
Bagdad Unified School District	Creighton Unified School District
Benjamin Franklin Charter School	Deer Valley Unified School District
Benson Unified School District	Desert Heights Charter Schools
Bloom365	Edkey, Inc.
Buckeye Elementary School District	Empower College Prep
Bullhead City Elementary School District	Espiritu Community Development Corp
Camp Verde Unified School District	Flagstaff Arts and Leadership Academy
Cartwright School District	Flagstaff Junior Academy
Casa Grande Elementary School District	Flagstaff Unified School District
Casa Grande Union High School District	Flowing Wells Unified School District
Cave Creek Unified School District	Fowler Elementary School District
Cedar Unified School District	

Franklin Phonetic Primary School, Inc.  
Gadsden School District  
Genesis Academy  
Gilbert Public Schools  
Gilbert Unified School District  
Glendale Union High School District  
Grand Canyon Unified School District  
Great Hearts Academies  
Holbrook Unified School District  
Humboldt Unified School District  
Imagine Charter Schools  
IntelliSchool  
Isaac Elementary School District  
J.O. Combs School District  
Kaizen Education Foundation  
Kayenta Unified School District  
Kingman Unified School District  
Kyrene Elementary School District  
La Paloma Academy  
Lake Havasu Unified School District  
Laveen Elementary School District  
Leading Edge Academy  
Legacy Traditional Charter School  
Leona Schools  
Lexington Life Academy  
Littlefield School District  
Littleton Elementary School District  
Lukachukai Community Schools  
Madison Elementary School District  
Madison Highland Prep  
Marana Unified School District  
Maricopa Unified School District  
Mesa Unified School District  
Mohave Valley Elementary School District  
Mohawk Valley School District  
Morristown Elementary School District

Mountain Institute CTED  
Mountain School, Inc.  
Nadaburg Elementary School District  
New World Education Center  
Nogales Unified School District  
Nosotros Academy  
Oracle Elem School District  
Osborn School District  
Page Unified School District  
Paideia Liberal Arts Academy  
Palo Verde School District  
Paradise Honors  
Paradise Valley Unified School District  
Paragon Management, Inc.  
Patagonia Public Schools  
Payson Unified School District  
Pendergast Elementary School District  
Peoria Unified School District  
Phoenix College Preparatory Academy  
Phoenix Elementary School District  
Phoenix Modern  
Phoenix Union High School District  
Pima Unified School District  
Prescott Unified School District  
Prescott Valley Charter School  
Queen Creek Unified School District  
Round Valley Unified School District  
Saddle Mountain Unified School District  
Sahuarita Unified School District  
San Carlos Unified School District  
Sanders Unified School District  
Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District  
Scottsdale Unified School District  
Sedona Charter school  
Show Low Unified School District  
Skyline Builders & Restoration

Snowflake Unified School District  
Southwest Technical Education District of  
Yuma  
Sunnyside Unified District  
Tempe Elementary School District  
Tempe Union High School District  
The Grande Innovation Academy  
The Paideia Academies, Inc.  
Tolleson Elementary School District  
Tolleson Union High School District  
Toltec School District  
Tuba City Unified School District  
Tucson International Academy  
Tucson Unified School District

Vail School District  
Vernon School District  
Victory Collegiate Academy  
Villa Montessori  
Washington Elementary School District  
Western Arizona Vocational District  
Whiteriver Unified School District  
Willcox Unified School District  
Williams Unified School District  
Wilson School District  
Winslow Unified School District  
Yuma Elementary School District  
Yuma Union High School District

### **Community Partners**

American Charter Schools Foundation  
Arizona Coalition for Healthcare Emergency  
Response  
Arizona Department of Corrections  
Cochise County Education Service Agency  
D.O.V.E.S. Network  
Family Involvement Center

Goodyear Police Department  
Northern Arizona Healthcare  
Pima County Office of Emergency  
Management  
Pima Prevention Partnership  
The Trust

The Arizona Department of Education's School Preparedness team thanks Arizona school communities - leadership, faculty, support staff, families, and students - for committing to promote safe and effective learning environments that engage our future generations to reach their fullest potential.