

## ***DuPage County Regional Office of Education School Mutual Aid Response Team DuSMART - Executive Summary***

**Purpose of the Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan** - This Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan is made in recognition of the fact that natural, human-caused, or technological occurrences may result in situations that are beyond the ability of individual school districts to manage and respond to effectively in terms of workforce and equipment resources on hand at a given time. Each Participating School Agency has and does express its intent to assist other Participating Agencies by assigning some of its workforce and equipment resources to an Impacted Agency as resources and situations allow. The specific intent of this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan is to permit each Participating Agency to more fully safeguard the lives, persons, and property of all citizens within its respective Primary School District Jurisdiction.

**Mutual Aid Plan** - If an emergency situation occurs and an impacted agency needs assistance, that agency coordinates with their local emergency responders to manage the incident. The Incident Command is typically coordinated by the impacted agency. This is very similar to fire, police, and county homeland security mutual aid agreements.

Whenever an Emergency Situation is of such magnitude and consequence that it is deemed advisable by the School District executive administrator of the impacted Agency, and the local resources are not available to manage the situation, the callout of DuSMART personnel and equipment will be as follows:

1. Call the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Duty Officer 24 hours a day - 630-682-7207
2. Call Out System - the Call Out system will be used to notify designated DuSMART school administrative personnel. A survey on the call out will indicate if the personnel are able to respond immediately, within the hour, or if they are unable to respond.
3. Confirmation of Activation method - local police department.

The formation of the DuSMART Bylaws shall be organized by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee shall conduct the business and make recommendations to the Regional Superintendent.

**Programs for Response and Recovery** - The impacted School District requests assistance and is in need of additional human resources to carry out the Emergency Operations Plan response and recovery for the following incidents that include, but are not limited to: *Family Reunification; Mass Casualty Event; Grief and Loss Response; and natural, human-caused, or technological disasters.*

**Professional Development** - Cooperative training for school administrators will include, but is not limited to: *Family Reunification, School Preparedness, National Incident Management Training, exercises, scenarios, and other training* as organized by the DuPage School Safety Task Force.

Contacts:

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## *DuSMART and Reunification - Talking Points and Tools to Inform Parents*

### **Overview for Administrators - Talking Points to Answer Parent and Staff Questions.**

The information below was developed from the “I Love U Guys” Foundation Standard Reunification Method materials distributed with permission to school districts and private schools in DuPage County. These materials were reviewed by the DuPage School Safety Task Force and found to align with the Family Reunification procedures of the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

The Standard Reunification Method, developed by the “I Love U Guys’ Foundation, was adopted by the DuPage County Regional Office of Education School Safety Task Force, in cooperation with the DuPage Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. In summary:

- This procedure provides school safety teams with proven methods for planning, practicing and achieving a successful student reunification.
- DuSMART, when arriving, will replace impacted school district personnel at whatever assignment the administrator of the impacted school district assigns.
- The core concept of the Reunification Method rests on accountability achieved through a process based on managing the physical location of students, staff and of incoming parents.
- The process also uses perforated cards. These cards are completed by parents or guardians at the reunification site. The cards are separated at the perforation, and a reunifier retrieves the child.

**Objectives.** The objective of this manual is to help districts develop, train and mobilize a district reunification team, and implement tangible, on-site and off-site reunification plans. Inherent in this objective is creating or strengthening partnerships with first responder agencies – police, fire and medical. By having district and school personnel build a well-designed draft plan, it becomes easier to engage the first responders and other key participants in the planning process. Performing a successful reunification is much more likely when drills are conducted in advance of an incident. Tabletop exercises and live exercises should be scheduled and performed. The DuPage Safety Task Force will coordinate and implement training for DuSMART responding staff.

**The process in a nutshell:** The materials in this manual provide the fundamentals for a comprehensive district plan. The beauty of the Standard Reunification Method is its simplicity.

- Establish a parent check-in location.
- Inform Incident Command of the reunification location selected and request assistance from local law enforcement for site security.
- Deliver the students to the student staging area, beyond the field of vision of parents/guardians.
- Once students are on site, notify parents of location.

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- “School Greeters” direct parents/guardians to the parent check-in location, and help them understand the process.
- Parents/guardians complete Reunification Cards (provided by the ROE).
- Staff are needed to guide parents/guardians to the correct lines, verify ID and school custody information.
- The “School Reunifier” recovers students from the student staging area and delivers to the parent at an inside location separate from the parent and student holding areas.
- Controlled lines of sight allow for an orderly flow, and issues can be handled with diminished drama or anxiety.
- Medical, notification, or investigative contingencies are anticipated.
- Pedestrian “flows” are created so lines don’t cross.
- Successful reunification is about managing the student, parent, and school staff experience.

**A reunification typically occurs because of a crisis or emergency.** Consequently, not just students and parents are trying to function at extraordinary stress levels; staff, their families and other first responders also feel the strain. By having a defined process with signage, cards, branding, procedures and protocols, the school presents an organized, calm face to all involved. Fear or uncertainty often results from the unknown. By adopting, communicating, and practicing a “known” procedure, the school removes some of that uncertainty.

**It is important to recognize that if students have been transported to a separate reunification site, a second command structure will be set up at the reunification location.** It may be labeled as a division under Unified Command and will need resources from first responders, but a command structure will need to be established to manage the reunification process, separate from the initial incident. Local police should be requested to provide reunification site security as soon as possible.

**There are two school-based teams – 1. Transport and 2. Reunification.** Most often, the Reunification Team is populated by district personnel. DuSMART staff may replace impacted school district personnel as they arrive as assigned by the Incident Command. The reasons for this:

- Training can be more readily coordinated and experienced teams are more proficient.
- School-based teams may initially be unavailable physically or emotionally. Smaller districts may not have enough staff.
- Team size is recommended at 1 Staff per 100 students plus 10 other staff members.
- Once the school staff are at the reunification site, their roles are assigned by the administration. DuSMART school administrators can relieve impacted school staff as they arrive.

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### **Reunification Process for Parents**

**Parent and family notification and messaging** - Parents are notified that the school has been evacuated. Additional notifications are made to parents on the location of the reunification site once students are en route or at the site. Parents may also be notified of the nature of the situation and reason for the school evacuation which may include: *utility failure, building structural situation, community event, or a critical event involving students and staff.*

**District communication method for emergencies** - Ensure you are signed up for emergency messages. This information is gathered during the annual school registration process.

**Don't go to the impacted site** - Parents arriving at the impacted school will require additional resources from police and fire who may be actively involved in the event management.

**Wait for information to be sent** - This will be difficult for all family members. Waiting is safer and will reduce the resources needed by police and fire to contain and manage the event.

#### **If you are notified that a school reunification process is required:**

- 1. Reunification Location Announced** - The school district will provide the location. Arrange safe travel to the reunification site, obeying all traffic laws.
- 2. Bring Identification** - School staff will need to verify custody rights that are confirmed with the school district's student information system. This information was gathered during the annual school registration process.
- 3. Parking Provided** - Families will be directed to a parent parking lot.
- 4. Student Supervision** - Students are with a teacher or staff member and not in view of arriving family members.
- 5. Greeting When You Arrive** - As parents arrive at the reunification site, greeters explain the process and distribute reunification cards.
- 6. Parents Fill Out The Card** - Parents complete the information requested on the card, and begin to self-sort into lines or move to the parent holding room.
- 7. Verify Parent ID** - School staff checkers verify parent ID and that the adult is allowed to take custody of the student. The card is torn on the perforation and the bottom is returned to the parent. The top is given to the school team accountant.
- 8. Reunification Area** - At the reunification area, parents give the bottom of the card to a reunifier. The reunifier goes to the assembly area to get the student.
- 9. Student Reunification To Parent/Guardian** - The reunifier returns the student to their parents asking the student if they feel comfortable leaving the school with that adult. They then note the time and initial at the bottom of the card.
- 10. Accountability** - The reunifier delivers the bottom of the card to the student assembly accountant. The accountant sorts the cards to reconcile with the school records system.


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### WHAT IFs

- **What if a parent can't pick up their student?** When a parent can't immediately go to the reunification site, students will only be released to individuals previously identified as a student's emergency contact.
- **What if the student drove to school?** There may be instances where a student may not be allowed to remove a vehicle from the parking lot. In this case, parents are advised to recover the student. In some circumstances, high school students may be released on their own.
- **What if the student isn't at the reunification site?** If the student isn't in the assembly area, the reunifier notifies a crisis counselor. The crisis counselor then makes contact with the parent and moves to a private location.
- **Interviews and Counseling.** In some cases, parents may be advised that a law enforcement investigation is underway and may be advised that interviews are necessary. Parents may be brought to a private location for emergency or medical information.

Reunification Parent Card:





**Reunification Information** (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

**Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.**

Student Name .....

Student Grade ..... Student Cell Phone Number .....

Name of person picking up student .....

Signature .....

Phone number of person picking up student .....

Relationship to student being picked up .....

Photo identification matches name of person picking up student? Y or N

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**Parent completes:**

Print Student Name Again .....

Student Grade ..... School personnel completes upon release of student

Student Birthday ..... TIME INITIALS OTHER

\*Printed by DuPage County, distributed to DuPage schools in June 2023, and available in English and Spanish.

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**Signs that parent and family members will see to help direct them:**



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### ***School Mutual Aid Response Team***

#### **Operational Guidelines**

The following are the operational guidelines of DuSMART.

#### **Section 1 - Purpose of Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan**

This Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan is made in recognition of the fact that natural, human-caused, or technological occurrences may result in situations that are beyond the ability of individual school districts to manage and respond effectively in terms of workforce and equipment resources on hand at a given time. Each Participating School Agency has and does express its intent to assist other Participating Agencies by assigning some of its workforce and equipment resources to an Impacted Agency as resources and the situation allows. The specific intent of this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan is to permit each Participating Agency to more fully safeguard the lives, persons, and property of all citizens within its respective Primary School District Jurisdiction.

**Responding DuSMART Personnel** - All participating agencies will designate two responding members who will be the primary recipients of DuSMART call-out messages:

- Superintendent - added for notification purposes and not considered a responder
- Task force member - 1 or as designated by the District Superintendent - responder

A spreadsheet was created and shared that includes all names for the RAVE call out with at least one and up to three work email addresses and cell phone numbers. This spreadsheet will be kept up-to-date by the ROE designee.

Current ROE designee:

- John Heiderscheidt, [jheiderscheidt@dupageroe.org](mailto:jheiderscheidt@dupageroe.org)

Dupage Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Contact:

- Sally Karner, [Sally.Karner2@dupageco.org](mailto:Sally.Karner2@dupageco.org)

#### **The Impacted Agency contacts DuPage OHSEM Duty Officer and provides the following:**

- Situation - Brief description of what happened
- What is needed - Personnel or equipment and for what purpose
- Staging areas will be determined by the Incident Commander or Unified Command - Each municipality has an established staging area to which mutual aid partners will report and be briefed for assignment. The pre-established area may not be used as determined by the Incident Commander. Incident Command coordinates personnel to be at the staging area and provide the briefings and assignments to arriving mutual aid personnel.
  - There will likely be a different staging area for DuSMART coordinated by the Impacted Agency that is different from the emergency responders staging location.
  - Staging location address - this should correspond with the local police agency.
  - Briefing responders. The Impacted Agency assigns their personnel to the staging location to brief the DuSMART team. At the staging area location, a school district

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member will provide a briefing of the incident, credential responding members, make a list of those arriving and provide areas of assignment.

- Transportation. The Impacted Agency arranges how the DuSMART team will get to location of assignment, if the DuSMART team cannot bring their vehicles to the location. The Impacted School coordinates this with the Incident Command.
- Credentials needed:
  - The Impacted Agency will provide the credentials through the Incident Command.
  - DuSMART members will be equipped with a safety vest with DuSMART label.
  - DuSMART will be provided a DuSMART identifier of some sort.
- Supplies to do the work:
  - **Communication** - additional radios for DuSMART members.
  - **Safety Vest** - School districts develop an appropriate supply of safety vests to conduct family reunification.
- Talking Points - as soon as available, the Impacted Agency will provide talking points that are used for the situation so DuSMART personnel will be able to interact with the people in the situation.
- Duties- DuSMART personnel can be used for functional roles as assigned, but do not manage the situation.
- After care plan - post incident, the Impacted Agency will include DuSMART personnel in the after incident care plan and the debriefing. The purpose is to provide trauma-informed care and mental health to ensure everyone is safe to travel home.
- After Action Report Improvement Plan (AAR-IP)- DuSMART personnel may be asked to participate in an After Action review but this is not required by either party.
- Post event counseling - Consider providing resources for post-event counseling. Everyone responds differently and on their own timeline.

#### **DuSMART members respond with the following:**

- **Transportation** - the members provide their own transportation.
- **Equipment** - Responding Agency personnel bring a safety vest, paper, pen(s), laptop (if available), chargers for phone/portable devices, and proper attire for inside or outside work for longer periods of time.
- **Sustenance** - snacks, hydration, and medications for extended operational periods.



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#### **Section 2 - Mutual Aid Plan - Generally**

If an emergency situation occurs and an Impacted Agency needs assistance, that agency coordinates with their local emergency responders to manage the incident. The Incident Command is typically coordinated by the Impacted Agency. Whenever an Emergency Situation is of such magnitude and consequence that it is deemed advisable by the executive administrator present of the Impacted Agency, or his or her designee, to request Mutual Aid from the Aiding Agencies, the executive administrator present of the Impacted Agency, or his or her designee, may do so in accordance with the following:

- **When To Call Out** - Mutual aid should be requested if the local resources become overwhelmed by the magnitude of the situation and additional personnel or equipment are needed.
- **Recovery Efforts** - DuSMART personnel are not active first responders to the impacted location. DuSMART responders are called to provide recovery efforts such as, but not limited to, Family Reunification, Mass Casualty Event, Grief and Loss Response, natural or human-caused, or technological disaster.
- **Resources Needed** - Determine what resources are required according to the **DuSMART** response. The Impacted Agency can request personnel assistance as follows from Responding Agencies. The Impacted Agency provides needed information:
  - Incident type
  - The activity to be conducted (i.e. reunification)
  - Exact location of the incident
  - The staging area where personnel should meet
  - When personnel are needed
- **Callout** - Call out the personnel and equipment required to the Impacted Agency in accordance with the DuSMART assignments callout procedures as follows:
  - **Duty Officer Call.** Call the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Duty Officer 24 hours a day - 630-682-7207
    - What information is needed for the duty officer:
      - Requesting District Name
      - Emergency incident and request (personnel, equipment, etc.)
      - Requesting Agency Contact Name and Telephone Number
      - Staging Area location
      - Any specific information necessary (What equipment/supplies to bring)
    - Confirmation of Activation method - the Duty Officer will contact the local police department for confirmation of the incident as needed.
- **Responding DuSMART** - responding Agency personnel procedure in summary:

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- Do not self-deploy
  - Bring your credentials (school ID and driver's license)
  - Respond to the assigned location or staging area
  - Drive at normal speeds and obey traffic safety rules and laws
  - Bring your equipment (Go Kit - pending)
  - Be prepared to help people in trauma
- **Unable to Respond.** The rendering of Mutual Aid under the terms of this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan shall not be required if an Aiding Agency has conditions or a local incident that prohibit response (repeated from the IGA).
- **Incident Responsibility.** The Impacted Agency Superintendent, or his or her designee, assumes responsibility to coordinate the activities of mutual aid partners through the Incident Commander (if applicable) by the jurisdiction of local emergency responders. The Impacted Agency Superintendent, or his or her designee, assigns personnel and equipment, of the Aiding Agencies, to positions when and where he or she deems necessary (repeated from the IGA).
- **Local Resources Overwhelmed.** Requests for Mutual Aid under this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan may be initiated only in the event of an Emergency Situation in which the demands for School response and recovery services on the impacted Agency exceed the individual physical and organizational capabilities of the impacted Agency. Mutual aid personnel should be considered as temporary and if long-term resources are needed, that should be determined by Incident or Unified Command (repeated from the IGA).
- **Indemnification, Insurance and Benefits.** Each Participating Agency assumes the responsibility for members of its school workforce acting pursuant to this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan, both as to indemnification of said members of the Participating Agency's workforce as provided for by 65 ILCS 5/1-4-6 in the case of municipal Participating Agencies or 55 ILCS 5/5-1002 in the case of county Participating Agencies, or any other Statute of the State of Illinois or law or bylaw of the Participating Agencies, as the case may be, and as to personal benefits to said members of the Participating Agency's workforce, all to the same extent as they are protected, insured, indemnified and otherwise provided for by the Statutes of the State of Illinois or the laws or guidelines of the Participating Agencies when those members of the Primary Agency's workforce are acting solely within the Participating Agency's Primary School District Jurisdiction (repeated from the IGA).

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### *School Mutual Aid Response Team*

#### **Section 3 - Advisory Panel**

- **Guidelines.** The formation of the DuSMART Guidelines, shall be organized by the Advisory Panel. The Advisory Panel shall conduct the business and make recommendations to the Regional Superintendent for final approval.
- **Members -** The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) lists members and advisory members. This Agreement shall be administered by the ROE, by its Regional Superintendent of Schools acting as chair of an Advisory Panel consisting of the following membership (repeated from the IGA):
  - the State’s Attorney or designee;
  - the ROE Superintendent or designee;
  - one superintendent selected by the superintendents of participating School Districts with a student enrollment of 1000 or less;
  - one superintendent selected by the superintendents of participating School Districts with a student enrollment of more than 1000 but less than 7000;
  - one superintendent selected by the superintendents of participating School Districts with a student enrollment of more than 7000;
  - one director selected by the Cooperatives of the School District Parties who are members;
  - not more than two superintendents selected by the RSS to ensure the Advisory Panel has members from an elementary district, a high school district and a unit district;
  - one administrator from the DuPage Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, one representative of the DuPage Fire Chiefs Association and one representative of the DuPage Chiefs of Police Association. These members are not parties to the Agreement or subject to dues.
- Attendance at meetings of the Advisory Panel shall be by the superintendent or director, or their designees. Advisory Panel for school year 2023-24:

Agency	Name	Position and District	Additional Info
1-999 students	Matt Rich	Supt . D34	Elementary District
1000-7000 students	Fred Cadena	Dir. Facilities (designee) - D33	Elementary District
7001+ student	Ron Wilke	Dir. Safety (designee) - D204	Unit District
Cooperatives in DuPage	Rachel Wisnewski	Dir. of Business - SASSED	Cooperative
State’s Attorney’s Office	Lisa Smith	DuPage Civil Chief (designee)	
Homeland Security	Craig Diekman	Dir. DuPage County OHSEM	
DuPage Police Chiefs	William Holmer	Police Chief (designee)	Carol Stream Police Dept.
DuPage Fire Chiefs	Mark Bozik	Fire Chief (designee)	Roselle Fire Dept.
ROE Designee	John Heiderscheidt	Safety Specialist (designee)	

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- **Response and Recovery** - The Impacted Agency requests assistance and is in need of additional human resources to carry out the Emergency Operations Plan response and recovery for the following incidents that include, but are not limited to:
  - *Family Reunification, Mass Casualty Event, Grief and Loss Response, natural, human-caused, or technological disaster.*
- **Professional Development** - Cooperative training for school administrators will include, but is not limited to:
  - *Family Reunification, School Preparedness, National Incident Management Training, exercises, scenarios, and other training as organized by the DuPage School Safety Task Force.*
- **Changes to guidelines.** The guidelines shall be reviewed annually and changed accordingly. All changes should be presented to the ROE School Safety Task Force for consideration and discussion and the Regional Superintendent for final approval.
- **Annual Report** - The Regional Superintendent will prepare an annual report to the members of the IGA. The information will provide the training events, participation levels of the training, training exercises/scenarios completed with a summary statement, and the number of actual Call Outs with a summary statement.
- **Fiscal Matters.** The Advisory Panel members coordinate a budget, track funds received, and pursue possible grants for additional funding needs.
  - Budget expenditures are developed by the Advisory Panel members.
  - Budget expenditures are aligned with the IGA and these guidelines.
  - Budget expenditures include needed tools, supplies, and training that include, but are not limited to:
    - *safety vests, ID credentials, supplies to carry out functions when responding, inclement weather gear, go kits for responders.*

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### *School Mutual Aid Response Team*

#### **Section 4 - Definitions**

For the purpose of this Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan, the following terms are defined as follows:

- **Aiding Agency:** A Participating Agency furnishing equipment and workforce to an impacted Agency.
- **Emergency Situation:** A situation occurring within an impacted Jurisdiction that requires the impacted Agency to perform Emergency Response Services that would exceed the stand-alone physical and organizational capabilities of the impacted Agency.
- **Guidelines:** DuSMART guidelines, the guidelines are developed by the Advisory Panel and approved by the Regional Superintendent.
- **Impacted Agency:** The Participating Agency that is primarily responsible for performing School District Services for an impacted Jurisdiction.
- **Mutual Aid:** Response and assistance by the Aiding Agencies in the event of an Emergency Situation.
- **Mutual Aid Agreement and Plan:** A definite and pre-arranged written agreement and plan whereby the provision of Mutual Aid is agreed upon in accordance with the School Mutual Aid Response Team (DuSMART) IGA.
- **Participating Agency:** A School District agency dedicated to performing school response and recovery emergency services for its Primary Jurisdiction that commits itself to participate in School Mutual Aid Response Team (DuSMART) pursuant to the terms of the IGA.
- **Primary School District Jurisdiction:** A geographically, politically, or contractually defined area for which a Participating Agency is primarily responsible for performing School District Services.
- **Responding Agency:** The Participating agency sending resources to the impacted Agency.
- **School Mutual Aid Response Team (DuSMART) Alarm Assignments:** A predetermined listing of workforce and equipment that may respond to aid an impacted Agency.
- **School Response Services:** The services and resources necessary to protect lives, and property within a Primary School District Jurisdiction, including, family reunification, family assistance, and sharing of resources such as equipment, vehicles, and personnel to assist the Primary School District in response and recovery efforts and duties.

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### *School Mutual Aid Response Team*

#### **Discussion items pending:**

Additional process on reunification and staging areas as needed:

- As we discussed, reunification was our original reason for putting this team together, and many districts and members have received training from the I Love You Guys Foundation.
- September 13 training event after the Task Force meeting at the West Chicago Park District.
- Staging site discussion - Staging Area may differ and vary depending on the situation. In all cases, the impacted school district and Incident Command will determine the staging area for reporting DuSMART personnel.
  - The reality is that a request for a DuSMART Reunification will probably be in the range of 5-30 people based on the I Love You Guys model and how many they recommend to run the Standard Reunification Method (SRM).
  - The impacted school district may need to stand up the reunification process before DuSMART personnel arrive.
  - From the time the request for DuSMART members is processed until they actually arrive from all over the county, impacted school district personnel may need to implement the reunification process. It may not work to have them arrive at a separate Staging Area and then move to the SRM site.
  - Impacted school districts may plan to plug DuSMART responders into existing roles and relieve impacted school personnel. Based on current DuPage School Districts from actual events, reunification is up and running quite quickly so a district might want to get started prior to some of the mutual aid arriving.

#### **To do:**

- Distribute documents to all superintendents, task Force Meembers, and DuSMART responders
- Announce first training on Sep 13th afer Task Force meeting - brief training and 1 or 2 iterations
- Format for call out.
  - We will create a form that outlines what is needed for the Impacted Agency to report what is needed to the Duty Officer.
- Go Kits
  - Develop materials and needs and purchase from funds, credentials, etc...
- Communications Response Team
  - Consider a sub team that supports the Impacted SD communications needs, call centers, talking points, messages