



Department of  
**Education**



# SCHOOL: LEVEL I

—— Severe Weather ——



# Tabletop Exercise Definition

A tabletop exercise is a discussion-based exercise where participants are presented a scenario and using their emergency operations plan, they discuss roles and responsibilities, resources, and communications.

# Purpose of a Tabletop Exercise

1. Enhance awareness and understanding of the emergency operations plan and specific roles and responsibilities.
2. Validate and test policies, plans, and procedures.
3. Identify strengths and areas for improvement.

# Overview of Roles

## Facilitator

1. Assign the role of the recorder.
2. Provide initial scenario and updates.
3. Lead participants through questions and discussion.
4. Assign any after-action activities to be completed.

## Participants

Using their Emergency Operations Plan and previous training as reference, participate in discussion, ask questions, and provide thoughtful feedback.

## Recorder

Take notes of the tabletop discussion, capturing all feedback, participant questions that still need to be addressed, or any after-action responsibilities that are assigned.

# Scenario Statement

At 11:00 AM when school is in session, the National Weather Service issues a **tornado watch** for the local area.



# Questions

1. What are your initial actions?
2. Who will be involved?
3. Are there any communications that need to be made?

# Update No. 1

At 1:00 PM, you receive notification that the tornado watch has been upgraded to a **tornado warning**.



# Questions

1. Does the upgraded threat change your actions?  
If so, please explain.
2. Will there be any additional personnel involved?  
If so, please explain.
3. How does the timing of the tornado warning  
impact the remainder of the school day?



## Update No. 2

A parent has arrived to the school to check-out their child for a doctor appointment, but you are still under tornado warning.



# Questions

1. What actions will be taken with this request?
2. What options do you have if you are unable to approve the request?
3. What policy or procedure addresses student check-outs during an emergency?

# After Action Questions

1. Did your emergency plan have all of the information you needed for responding to this scenario? If not, what revisions are needed?
2. Did your plan adequately account for any special needs of students and staff to respond to this scenario?
3. Were there any training needs identified from this scenario activity?
4. Are there specific resources, relationships, or memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that need to be obtained or established in order to support this type of response?