



## ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

### Title: **Safe Schools: Critical Event Teams**

**Effective Date:** December 5, 2006

**Responsibility:** Superintendent of Program  
and Schools (Elementary)

#### **RATIONALE:**

The Near North District School Board is committed to providing safe, welcoming and supportive working and learning environments. In order to educate learners to their fullest potential in preparation for life-long learning, immediate and sensitive intervention and support can be crucial when staff or students experience traumatic events in their lives. Response teams have been established within the Board to work with the affected school staff and community to assist in coordinating and facilitating appropriate supports. The Critical Event Response Team (CERT) is a team of educators and support staff who are trained to respond to crisis events in our school system that affect more than one student and/or staff member.

#### **DEFINITION OF A CRITICAL EVENT:**

A critical event is a death, accident or traumatic event that affects more than one student or staff member, and that goes beyond the school resources in terms of coping and responding.

#### **ORGANIZATION:**

The Critical Event Response Team (CERT) exists to support schools in the all regions of the Board in the geographical District of Nipissing and Parry Sound.

Team membership varies, but in general is comprised of teachers and school administrators, clerical support staff, school nurses, police officers and professional support personnel. The CERT team lists will be updated at the beginning of each school year and the updated lists will be forwarded to principals by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Each team has a team leader who is the first contact in a crisis.

Team members meet throughout the year for professional development which is organized by the team leader.

#### **ROLES OF CERT:**

The CERT teams can assist in many ways such as:

Our mission is to educate learners to their fullest potential in preparation for life-long learning.

- a) Provide release time in a traumatic situation for the teacher to make calls or to talk with CERT members. CERT members are not to be used as occasional or supply teachers.
- b) Provide group activities to help students in crisis.
- c) Be available to talk, listen and interact with staff members and/or students.
- d) Provide staff with additional resources.
- e) Set a date for a follow-up meeting.
- f) Help staff organize attendance at a funeral or memorial service.

**CONTACTING CERT:**

Each school has a CERT blue folder in which is the updated list of team members. The school principal or designate would start calling from the top of the list and keep calling others on the list until a team member is reached. The name at the top of the list is the team leader. The team member who is contacted will then initiate the intervention procedure.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Additional information and other specifics are included in the CERT blue folders. Other resources pertaining to grief issues can be accessed through the team leaders.