



Department of  
**Education**



**DISTRICT: LEVEL III**

——Tornado Response ——

# 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, issues to be addressed, or any after-action responsibilities that are assigned.

# Scenario Statement

On Saturday morning, **two tornadoes touched down** across portions of your community. There are reports of injuries and widespread damage.



# Questions

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

# Update No. 1

Reports of **injuries and home loss** for multiple school staff and students are coming in. In addition, one school has **major damage**, with the roof and walls destroyed. A second school has extensive damage to its cafeteria. It is also reported that four school buses have been destroyed.

# Questions

1. With this information, what immediate steps need to be conducted?
2. Who will be involved? How will you organize teams?
3. Are there any communications that need to be prepared?
4. How will you communicate with staff, students, and parents?





## Update No. 2

School will be back in session within a week. Students and staff from the destroyed school are without housing and the other school will not have a functioning cafeteria for at least a few weeks. There are roads and bridges damaged across the county. Debris is being collected and hauled by trucks across county roads each day.

# Questions

1. What alternative school building options do you have for displaced staff and students?
2. What actions need to be completed to prepare the new location?
3. With impacted roads and buildings, a new school location, and four less school buses, what transportation needs must be?
4. What options are available to address the feeding needs of the school that lost its cafeteria? Are there community partners that can provide assistance?

# After Action Questions

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