

## School Disaster Preparedness

### Planning Resource

\*There is a difference between an **emergency** and a **disaster**. When an **emergency** occurs, we dial 9-1-1 and help arrives. A **disaster** is when emergency responders are overwhelmed and schools are likely to be left to their own resources.

- Washington State is ranked Number 1 in the nation for risk of disaster.
- Washington State is ranked Number 2 in the nation for risk of disaster from earthquake. California is ranked Number 1.
- It is estimated that in a regional disaster, only ½ of a school's students will leave the first day. Half of the remaining students, or ¼ of the population, will leave the second day. Half of those remaining students will leave the third day, etc.
- Students and staff may be evacuated outdoors for a number of hours or a number of days. Broken glass or other dangerous debris, gas leaks, hazardous materials, or structural damage may render school buildings uninhabitable or inaccessible.
- Hypothermia sets in quickly and can be life-threatening. Temperatures do not need to be near freezing. Being wet and cold brings on hypothermia.
- The more organized a school appears to parents and the better educated parents are to mass student release procedures, the more likely they are to wait for their child and less likely to storm the evacuation site and take their child.

*\*From the Planning Resource section of the Washington State PTA website*

### Resources

The Washington State PTA website ([www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org)) has thorough emergency preparedness advice and worksheets under "Resources". The federal government also has [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). This site is geared more towards individual and home preparedness than school preparedness. The American Red Cross website ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)) under "Preparing and Getting Trained" provides useful information about personal preparedness.

### Mission & Goal

The mission of the Snoqualmie Valley PTSA Council Emergency Preparedness Committee is to communicate to local units how they can assist their schools in preparing for disasters. Our goal is to inventory and standardize what each school provides for emergency preparedness so all children are equally protected throughout the district.