



School Crisis Response Teams: Training and Support

Funds are available to support Minnesota Service Cooperatives in setting up, training and supporting regional school crisis response teams. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is charged with supporting school districts in their ability to respond to school crises, per [Minnesota Statue](#). MDE's School Climate Center is collaborating with the Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWCS) to provide training and help other cooperatives develop their teams. We invite you to consider creating a crisis response team for your region.

What is a School Crisis?

A reaction to a situation or event which causes psychological trauma to students and/or staff and requires immediate action because of its disruption or potential disruption to the educational process. Possible types of crisis or tragedies include:

- Death of a student or staff member
- Acts of violence
- Suicide attempt or completion
- Automobile accident
- Natural disaster
- Medical emergencies

All school districts have emergency crisis management plans in place. However, in times of great tragedy such as student or staff death, those primary responders may be profoundly impacted by the event and unable to provide the necessary support to students. A school crisis response team is comprised of members who have specialized training in critical incident stress management. They are a support system to staff and students.

This support for a few days can help the school staff to care for their community in the long run. Quick crisis response mental health support can help minimize damaging psychological results following the tragedy, and help schools return to normal routines as quickly and calmly as possible.

SWSC has a description of their [School Crisis Response Team \(SCRT\) / Overview](#), as well as testimony on the usefulness of the teams in a moment of crisis.

Statewide Network of School Crisis Response

Creating a team involves identifying and training team members. Team members can be drawn from the public and private sectors and various disciplines, including school administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, teachers, nurses, security experts, media relations professionals, and other related areas.

Statewide SCRT Trainers

Minnesota has two school crisis response team (SCRT) trainers. The statewide SCRT trainers are [ICISF certified](#) and will provide the initial two-day training to each regional team. The trainer will also provide ongoing/annual training. The trainers may also provide additional training to a region or school district if specific needs arise.

MDE's Support

The Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) School Climate Center will serve as the statewide network point of contact to maintain a RSCT resource page on the MDE website, convene the Statewide SCRT Network Advisory Committee, coordinate trainings, and provide written resources to each RSCT. It will serve as the liaison between MDE, the Minnesota Service Cooperatives and the regional school crisis team (RSCT) leads.

Statewide SCRT Network Advisory Committee

The Statewide SCRT Network Advisory Committee will be led by MDE, and provide guidance related to school crisis response. Members of the committee will include each SCRT lead contact, a representative of the MDE School Climate Center, a representative from the Minnesota School Safety Center at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, the Statewide SCRT Trainer, and representatives from the following Associations: Social Workers, Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Nurses. The committee will meet quarterly.

Regional Team Leads

Each member of the Minnesota Service Cooperatives will recruit someone to serve as a Regional Team Lead. The Regional Team Leader will recruit members, coordinate regional trainings, communicate with the team members, and promote the team's services to schools and districts. They will be the first point of contact should a school request support, and will coordinate the team's assistance to the district.

Financial Considerations

SCRT Compensation

Regional team leader compensation and expenses should be determined by each service cooperative. The team lead for a district's crisis response will be provided a stipend for their work. Other members of the team deployed may be compensated for mileage and expenses by their district.

Annual Training

Each regional team of up to 35 team members will attend the initial two-day training, and attend one regional training per school year to train new team members. The cost of the initial training will be \$4,000; the one-day refresher training to remain an active member of the SCRT cost will be \$2,000.

For more information on the Regional School Crisis Response Teams, contact [Nancy Riestenberg](#), 651-582-8433.