

Emergency Article #1 For District Web Site

Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant: Beefing-up School Emergency Planning

Over the next five months in a series of articles that will appear on the District Web Site, District 279 will share details of the implementation of the Emergency Response and Crisis and Management grant. The District was privileged to be one of 130 districts in 38 states to receive a *Safe and Drug Free Schools* grant, this one totaling \$213,743. The Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools is a division of the U.S. Department of Education.

These articles are intended to give parents, students, staff and the general public an account of how these funds were used to improve our emergency planning over an eighteen month period, and to show how the grant provided the resources that allowed the District to examine and take corrective action to prevent emergencies, improve the District's emergency preparedness, and respond to, and recover from emergencies.

The grant touched every school building and educational site in the District with a special focus on coordinating the District's emergency plan with local emergency responders—the fire departments, police departments, local mental health agencies and county/community health departments in Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove and Brooklyn Center. Sharing our plan, coordinating protocols and establishing relationships with our local emergency responders before a crisis strikes was a key goal of this grant.

In the coming months, we'll share how this grant impacted our Districtwide Emergency Management Plan, and how we were able to beef-up prevention strategies through mini-grants for the schools. We'll share what we learned from a comprehensive Districtwide vulnerability assessment, and several staged crisis simulations. We'll explain why we made some changes in the number and type of drills practiced by students and staff, and we'll share our progress toward enhancing relations with local emergency responders.

Watch for these stories starting in January 2006.