

SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS AND TEAMS

Emergencies and violent incidents in schools are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to adopt and keep current a comprehensive district wide school safety plan and building-level emergency response plan(s) which address violence prevention, crisis intervention, emergency response and management.

Taken together, the plans shall provide a comprehensive approach to addressing school safety and violence prevention, and provide the structure where all individuals can fully understand their roles and responsibilities for promoting the safety of the entire school community. The plans shall be designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the district's coordination with local and county resources. The plans shall also address risk reduction/prevention, response and recovery with respect to a variety of types of emergencies and violent incidents in district schools.

In accordance with state law and regulation, the district shall have the following safety teams and plans to deal with violence prevention, crisis intervention and emergency response and management:

Comprehensive District-Wide School Safety Team and Plan

The Board shall annually approve a school. This team shall be responsible for the development and annual review of the comprehensive district-wide school safety plan. The plan shall cover all district school buildings and shall address violence prevention (taking into consideration a range of programs and approaches that are designed to create a positive school climate and culture), crisis intervention, emergency response and management including communication protocols, at the district level. It shall include all those elements required by law and regulation.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be the district's chief emergency officer, and shall coordinate communication between school staff and law enforcement and first responders. The chief emergency officer shall ensure that all staff understand the school safety plan and receive training on the emergency response plan, violence prevention and mental health, and shall also ensure that plans are completed, reviewed annually, and updated as needed by the designated dates. The chief emergency officer shall ensure that required evacuation and lock-down drills are conducted.

Emergency response plans shall include protocols in response to carbon monoxide alarms or detection. Alarm or detection of carbon monoxide will result in the appropriate actions as described by the emergency response plan.

Emergency response plans shall designate:

- an emergency response team for incidents that includes appropriate school personnel, law enforcement officials, fire officials, and representatives from local, regional and/or state emergency response agencies to assist the school community in responding to a violent incident or emergency; and

- a post-incident response team that includes appropriate school personnel, medical personnel, mental health counselors and other related personnel to assist the community in coping with the aftermath of a serious violent incident or emergency.

The Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, shall annually designate a threat assessment team to provide ongoing support and information in order to identify, and assess individuals who may be potential threats to safety, with the intent of minimizing acts of violence in the school community. The threat assessment team shall be composed of, but not limited to, the following personnel from both within the school and the larger community, as appropriate: building administrators, legal counsel, the medical director and/or school nurse, school counselors, local mental health and social service providers, law enforcement, school resource officers, security personnel, and facilities and maintenance personnel. The team shall meet regularly. The team shall be mindful of the need for discretion and observance of confidentiality requirements.

Students shall be encouraged to bring their concerns to any district employee. If a district employee becomes aware of a threat to the school community, the Principal shall be informed and he/she will convene the threat assessment team. The Principal may request the participation of the following additional individuals who may have specific knowledge of the potential perpetrator: supervisors, teachers, students and parents. The Principal is responsible for keeping the Superintendent informed about the activities of the threat assessment team. Threat assessment team members shall receive appropriate training.

The Principal shall be responsible for conducting at least one test every school year of the emergency response procedures under this plan including procedures for sheltering and early dismissal.

To maintain security and in accordance with law, the emergency response plan(s) shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law or any other law.

Annual Review and Report

All plans shall be annually reviewed and updated, if necessary, July 15th. In conducting the review, the teams shall consider any changes in organization, local conditions and other factors including an evaluation of the results of the annual test of the emergency response procedures which may necessitate updating of plans. If the plan requires no changes, then it shall remain in effect. If the plan requires change, then the updated plan shall be submitted to the Board of Education in time to allow 30-days of public comment and to hold a public hearing which provides for the participation of school personnel, students and other interested parties prior to Board adoption. All plans must be adopted by the Board of Education by September 1.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for filing the school safety plan and any amendments to the plan with the Commissioner within 30 days after their adoption. The plan will be posted on the district's website. Each Building Plans and any amendments shall be submitted to the state police within 30 days.

Cross-ref: 0115, Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention
5300, Code of Conduct
9700, Staff Development

Ref: Education Law §2801-a (school safety plans)
Executive Law §2B (state and local natural and manmade disaster preparedness)
8 NYCRR Part 155 (Educational Facilities)
School Safety Plans Guidance, New York State Education Department, June 2010

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