

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 will 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 will 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 will also address risk reduction/prevention, response and recovery with respect to a variety of types of emergencies and violent incidents in district schools, and will address school closures and continuity of operations in the context of epidemics/pandemics, in either the plans themselves or in addenda to the plans.

In accordance with state law and regulation, the district will 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 will annually appoint a district-wide school safety team that includes, but is not be limited to, a representative from the following constituencies: The Board, teachers, administrators, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel (including bus drivers and monitors). This team will be responsible for the development and annual review of the comprehensive district-wide school safety plan. The plan will cover all district school buildings and will 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 will include all those elements required by law and regulation.

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

Emergency response plans will 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 must 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.

During emergencies, staff are authorized to temporarily cover classroom door vision panels when it is likely to protect staff and students. For example, covering vision panels may prevent an intruder from determining if a classroom is occupied, thereby discouraging attempts to gain access. During emergencies, staff are also authorized to temporarily block doors to slow the access of intruders. Building-level emergency response plans must address the temporary covering of door vision panels and the temporary blocking of doors during emergencies.

The Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, will 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 will 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 will meet regularly. The team will be mindful of the need for discretion and observance of confidentiality requirements.

Students will 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 will 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 will receive appropriate training.

The Principal will 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) will be confidential and will not be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law or any other law.

Annual Review and Report

All plans will be annually reviewed and updated, if necessary, July 15th. In conducting the review, the teams will 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 will remain in effect. If the plan requires change, then the updated plan will 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 of Schools is responsible for submitting the district-level school safety plan and any amendments to the plan to the Commissioner within 30 days after its adoption, no later than October 1 of each year. The district-wide plan will be posted on the district's website. Each Building Principal is responsible for submitting the building-level emergency response plan for the building, and any amendments to the plan, to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and the state police within 30 days after its adoption, but no later than October 15 of each year until the 2020-2021 school year, when it must be submitted by October 1 of each year.

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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