

**SAFE SCHOOLS**

The Board of Education is committed to the prevention of violence against people or property in the schools or at school activities, whether by students, staff or others. A positive school climate supports school safety through the professional use of resources. Staff members who implement this or any other Board policy will receive the full support of the Board and the administration.

At the same time, the Board also recognizes the need to address emergencies, crisis situations, and violent incidents in an effective and expeditious manner. This Policy is intended to promote crisis and violence prevention, while establishing guidelines for emergency response and management.

The Board is responsible for adopting District-wide and building-level safety plans that create a comprehensive approach to violence prevention, response to a variety of emergency situations, minimize the impact of emergencies, and facilitate coordination with local and county resources. The District-wide and building-level safety plans will be reviewed annually by the appropriate team, and updated as needed within the timeframes designated in law and regulation.

**Comprehensive District-Wide Safety Plan****1. District-Wide Safety Team**

The District-wide Safety Plan will be developed by the District-wide Safety Team, which is appointed by the Board of Education. The Team is also responsible for reviewing the Plan annually and determining the need for updates or modifications.

The District-wide Safety Team will include:

- a. Representatives of the Board of Education
- b. Teacher, administrator, and parent organization representatives;
- c. School safety personnel;
- d. Mental health personnel; and
- e. Other school personnel.

The Board may choose to have a student representative on the District-wide Safety Team, but confidential aspects of the District-wide Safety Plan and of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans cannot be shared, presented or discussed in the presence of the student representative.

**2. District-wide Safety Plan**

The District-wide Safety Plan is intended to prevent or minimize the impact of emergencies and to coordinate communication and use of resources with city and county agencies, including law enforcement, fire protection officials, ambulance, and other emergency response agencies.

The Plan must include guidelines and procedures for:

- a. Use of appropriate prevention and intervention strategies, including:
  - i. Use of restorative practices as a primary prevention and intervention strategy in accordance with the *Code of Conduct* (1400), including:
    - 1) Plans for staff training in restorative practices on a regular basis; and

- 2) Guidelines for application of these practices;
  - ii. Non-violent conflict resolution training programs;
  - iii. Peer mediation programs and youth courts;
  - iv. Extended day and other school safety programs;
  - v. Collaboration with state and local law enforcement officials to ensure:
    - 1) Effective recruitment and screening of school safety officers and other security personnel;
    - 2) Adequate training of school safety officers and other security personnel, including methods for de-escalating potentially violent situations;
- b. Responding to implied or direct threats of violence, or acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel, or visitors to the school - including threats by students against themselves;
- c. Contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident or emergency;
- d. Contacting parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation to a District student of:
  - i. A violent incident; and/or
  - ii. An implied or direct threat of violence by a student against themselves, including suicide.

The Superintendent or their designee is required to notify parents, guardians or persons in parental relation in a timely manner of situations that raise significant concerns for student safety. These situations include the arrest or conviction of staff members for legal offenses that represent a threat to children.

The method, content and timing of notification should reflect cooperation with legal authorities, protection of employee rights, and demonstration of good communications practice.

- e. Coordinating District resources and staff during emergencies, including identifying the officials authorized to make decisions and the staff members assigned to provide assistance;
- f. Enhancing school building security, including methods for deploying school safety officers and/or the use of security devices or procedures;
- g. Disseminating information to teachers, administrators, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students regarding early detection of potentially violent behaviors, precursors, and risk factors;
- h. Providing annual school safety training to staff and students in accordance with state law and regulation, which includes violence prevention and mental health;

- i. Conducting drills and other exercises to test components of the safety plan, in coordination with local and county emergency responders;
- j. Identifying appropriate responses to a variety of emergencies, including bomb threats, shootings, hostage-takings, intrusions and kidnapping;
- k. Identifying strategies for facilitating and improving communication and reporting of potentially violent incidents, such as youth-run programs, peer mediation, conflict resolution, forums or mentors for students concerned with bullying or violence, and anonymous reporting mechanisms;
- l. Describing the duties of all school safety and security personnel, including the hiring and screening process and training required; and
- m. Notifying all schools within the District of a disaster, violent incident, or emergency.

The District-wide Safety Plan and any subsequent updates/amendments must be adopted by the Board of Education. To allow school staff, students, parents, and other interested parties to participate in developing the Plan, a minimum 30-day public comment period and one public hearing must be conducted prior to Board adoption. The Plan and any subsequent updates/amendments must be submitted to the NYS Education Commissioner within 30 days of adoption.

### **3. Chief Emergency Officer for the District**

The Superintendent of Schools or their designee shall be the District's Chief Emergency Officer. The Chief Emergency Officer is responsible for:

- a. Coordinating communication between school staff, law enforcement, and other first responders;
- b. Ensuring that the District-wide Safety Team:
  - i. Completes the District-wide Safety Plan, conducts annual reviews, and updates the Plan as needed to allow time for public comment and a public hearing prior to the Board's consideration for adoption; and
  - ii. Coordinates the District-wide Plan with the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.
- c. Ensuring that all Building-Level Emergency Response Plans are completed, reviewed annually, and updated as needed;
- d. Coordinating appropriate safety, security, and emergency training for District and school staff;
- e. Assisting in selecting security-related technology and developing procedures for its use; and

- f. Ensuring that evacuation, shelter, and lock-down drills are conducted in all District buildings, as required by New York State Education Law.

The Superintendent will ensure that written information of emergency procedures is provided to all students and staff at the beginning of each school year by the date designated in law and regulation.

### **Building-Level Emergency Response Plans**

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans are confidential, and may only be disclosed to authorized department or school staff and to law enforcement officers.

#### **1. Building-Level Emergency Response Teams**

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Team is responsible for developing the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, and reviewing the Plan annually to determine the need for updates or modifications. The Plan is to address crisis prevention and intervention and response to emergencies at the building level.

Members of the Building-Level Emergency Response Team are to be appointed by the building principal, and are to include:

- a. Representatives of teacher, administrator, and parent organizations;
- b. School safety personnel;
- c. School Mental Health team;
- d. Other school staff;
- e. Community members; and
- f. Local law enforcement, ambulance, fire protection officials, and other emergency response agencies

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Team is also responsible for designating:

- a. An Emergency Response Team to assist the school community in responding to an incident or emergency that arises. This Team will include school staff and representatives from law enforcement, fire protection, and local, regional and/or state emergency response agencies; and
- b. A Post-Incident Response Team to assist the school community in coping with the aftermath of an incident or emergency. This Team will include school staff, medical personnel, mental health counselors, and other associated personnel.

#### **2. Building-Level Emergency Response Plans**

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans are confidential, and may only be disclosed to authorized department or school staff and to law enforcement officers.

The Plans must include:

- a. Procedures for responding to a variety of emergency situations, such as those requiring evacuation, sheltering and lockdown. These procedures must at least include:
  - i. Evacuation routes and shelter sites; and

- ii. Methods for addressing medical needs, transportation, and notifying parents and guardians
- b. Floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school interior, school grounds, and road maps of the surrounding area;
- c. Description of the internal and external communication systems to be used in emergencies;
- d. Definition of the chain of command, consistent with the National Interagency Incident Management System;
- e. Coordination with the state-wide plan for disaster mental health services to assure that the school has access to federal, state and local mental health resources in the event of a violent incident;
- f. Procedures for annual review and update of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan;
- g. Procedures for conducting drills and other exercises to test the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan and for reviewing the outcomes of these tests to determine the need to modify the procedures and/or the Emergency Response Plan;
- h. Procedures for securing and restricting access to a crime scene to preserve evidence in the event of a law enforcement investigation; and
- i. Information regarding the school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and the phone numbers to contact key officials.

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan and update is to be filed with the appropriate local law enforcement agency and with the state police within 30 days of adoption.

### **3. Drills to Test Emergency Response Procedures**

The building principal or administrator is responsible for ensuring that staff and students receive instruction and training to be able to respond appropriately in an emergency in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic.

At least once each school year, the District is required to conduct a test of procedures under the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans, including sheltering, lockdown, or early dismissal. The test is to be conducted no more than fifteen minutes prior to usual dismissal time. The purpose of this test is to examine the effectiveness of the communications and transportation system during emergencies. Parents and guardians are to be notified at least one week prior to this test.

Rochester City School District school buildings will conduct a minimum of 12 annual drills each year:

- a. 8 of the 12 drills will be evacuation drills (2 of the 8 evacuation drills will be using an alternative egress);

- b. 4 of the 12 annual drills are required to be lockdown drills;
- c. 6 of the 12 drills must be completed by December 31<sup>st</sup> each year, with the remainder to be completed by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Drills will be announced and unannounced and will be held at different times of the school day. Students are required to receive instruction on how to safely evacuate during their eating periods or assemblies.

Summer programs are required to complete two evacuation drills, one of which must be conducted during the first week of the program.

Individuals in charge of an afterschool program, event, or performance are required to notify those in attendance of the procedures to be followed in an emergency. This notice will be provided at the beginning of the program, performance, or event.

Cross-ref: District Policy Prohibiting Discrimination or Harassment of Students or Employees (0100)  
 Sexual Harassment (0110)  
 Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (0115)  
 Visitors to Schools (1240)  
 Code of Conduct (1400)  
 Threat Assessment Regulation (1400-R)  
 Public Conduct on School Property (1520)  
 Wandering and Elopement Policy (4240)  
 Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities (5305)  
 Drug Free Schools (5312.1a)  
 Policy Regarding De-Escalation of Crisis Situations (8200)

Ref: New York State Education Law 2801-A  
 New York State Education Law Section § 807.1 and § 807.1.a  
 May 2016, New York State Department of Education, Field Memo from Assistant Commissioner, Office of Student Support Services, Renee Rider  
 August 2016, New York State Department of Education, Field Memo from Assistant Commissioner, Office of Student Support Services, Renee Rider

Notes: Prior policy, Policy Manual, Comprehensive School Safety Plan (December 7, 1995), revised; Amended December 16, 2010 pursuant to Resolution No. 2010-11: 434; Amended July 29, 2013 pursuant to Resolution No. 2013-14: 83; Amended November 17, 2016 pursuant to Resolution No. 2016-17: 370; Amended May 23, 2019 pursuant to Resolution No. 2018-19: 919; Amended March 23, 2023 pursuant to Resolution No. 2022-23: 555

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