

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

Updated August 15, 2024

Overview

The Rochester City School District is committed to the safety and preparedness of its students, staff and its visitors. Our District-Wide School Safety Plan is an all-hazards approach to crisis management and focuses on mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery procedures.

The District-Wide School Safety Plan is decreed by the Superintendent and adopted by the Board of Education. This plan is implemented at the time of an emergency at the direction of the Superintendent and/or her staff. "Incident Commanders" (Principal/designee) implement Building-Level Emergency Response Plans (BLERP) when directed by their respective School Chief, Deputy Superintendent or the Chief of Operations. In the absence of direction from Senior Administration, each Building Incident Commander (Principal/designee) is authorized and directed to implement this plan, or take other action as may be, in her or his judgment, necessary to save lives and mitigate the effects of emergencies.

The District-Wide School Safety Plan is reviewed annually by the District-Wide Safety Team under the guidance of the Superintendent or designated Chief Emergency Officer. The District-Wide Safety Team is appointed by the Board of Education. The Plan is reviewed annually each spring and made available for a 30-day comment period and one public hearing after any revisions have been made. The Board of Education reviews and adopts the Plan annually and it is uploaded to the Rochester City School District website.

New York State Education Code 2801-a and Commissioner's regulation 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 require that each school district shall amend and adopt a comprehensive district-wide school safety plan and building-level safety plans in relation to emergency response and management, and crisis intervention. Plans are annually reviewed by the district-wide school safety team and building-level school safety teams.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has led to many challenges and new opportunities for school districts and communities. The Rochester City School District is committed to the health and safety for all its students, staff and families. The District will continue to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

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INTRODUCTION

School safety is the job of the entire District community. This effort requires leadership and coordination by District and school administration with involvement and participation from all areas of the community. Coordination with local law enforcement, fire officials, emergency officials and the overall community in planning, conducting drills and other training exercises ensures a comprehensive and unified approach to safety and emergency planning. Relationship building and community engagement and partnerships are vital efforts in building and maintaining safety.

The purpose of the District-Wide School Safety Plan and each school's Building-Level Emergency Response Plan (BLERP) is to assist District and school officials in identifying and responding to potential emergencies and crises by assigning responsibilities and duties of District and school officials, students, families, and other community stakeholders. It is vital to develop, train, exercise, and maintain BLERPs to ensure an effective response before, during and after an incident. A well developed and rehearsed BLERP provides parents/guardians, students, District staff, and the community at large the reassurance that the school has established guidelines, policies and procedures to respond to threats and hazards effectively and efficiently. The Rochester City School District utilizes the New York State suggested planning format to assist the District and schools in meeting legislative mandates outlined in 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 and provides the use of best practices to improve outcomes following emergency situations.

The content, organization, and terminology provided in the New York State Guide to School Emergency Response Planning aligns with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's "Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (2013)". The organization of this guide supports two key practices adopted in New York State. First, the guide provides standardized language that is consistent with current national emergency response protocols. Secondly, consistent formatting in each BLERP aligns critical information necessary to improve rapid response to emergencies together in the following sections:

- The Basic Plan
- Functional Annexes
- Threat/Hazard Specific Annexes

The Basic Plan standardizes language and provides a structured framework for school BLERPs statewide. Individualized policies and procedures have been developed by the Rochester City School District based upon potential circumstances and resources. The Rochester City School District uses the recommended New York State Functional Annexes in order to standardize the terminology used by District employees and emergency responders during an emergency.

Functional Annexes focus on critical operational functions and the courses of action developed to carry them out.

Courses of action and best practices are outlined in each of the District's Building-Level Emergency Response Plans Threat/Hazard Specific Annexes section. These annexes detail what to do in the event of various emergencies. These BLERP's provide current information about school response team members, students and staff with special needs; and any other critical information relative to each school building. The District has also identified appropriate staff to fill specific roles related to incident command and appropriate emergency response teams.

Building principals, assistant principals and other key members have been trained in the Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). The Superintendent or designated Chief Emergency Officer District is responsible to coordinate and communicate between staff, law enforcement and first responders. The Chief Emergency Officer is also responsible for ensuring the completion and yearly update of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. All Building-Level Emergency Response Plans are confidential, but are submitted to New York State and local emergency responders for review. Appropriate training and exercises are required at the beginning of the school year to ensure that all District personnel and students understand the plan and their roles and responsibilities.

Administrators and key members of both building-level and District emergency response teams are required to implement ICS principals during an emergency. Commissioner's regulation 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 requires that each school Principal or Building Administrator appoint specific individuals to the Building-Level Emergency Response Team which is tasked with the annual review and update, as necessary, of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. Principals or Building Administrators are also required to designate appropriate individuals to the Building Emergency Response Teams and Post Incident Response Teams which are tasked with responding to and recovering from emergencies in or around the school buildings. Principals and/or Building Administrators are required to complete ICS 100: Introduction to the Incident Command System. Other building leadership and staff are encouraged to complete formalized training when available. Refresher training will be provided annually, or as necessary or requested, to building and District leadership. The District reserves the right to require formalized ICS and NIMS training for designated staff should the training become required by New York State or the federal government.

RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

The administration of the Rochester City School District (RSCD) believes that improved communication among students, parents/guardians and school staff adds to the quality of life and sense of safety at all of our schools. Violence prevention and safe environment strategies require community-wide collaborative efforts that include students, families, teachers, administrators, staff, social and mental health professionals, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, security professionals, parents and the business community.

The Division of Student Support Services provides a continuum of programs and services to support the whole child. The Division aims to address the student's academic, physical, social-emotional, and college/career needs and development. Both preventative and intervention support are provided across the District to meet the needs of scholars and families. Student Support Services assist in the development of best practices and programs that will support the social and emotional health of all students. This is achieved through working cooperatively with school principals, central office staff and collaborating with community agencies to support student, staff and parent needs. Such communication allows for the reporting, intervention, and prevention of potentially violent incidents before they actually occur. The following is a brief list of programs and initiatives that are in place at some or all of the RSCD schools that promote open communication and have a positive impact on the quality of life in our schools. The list does not include every single service or program provided by the District. Please note, programs and initiatives vary by school.

- Primary Project - National evidence-based school program providing early screening of all children in targeted primary grades and intervention for those children identified with school adjustment difficulties in pre-kindergarten through second grade.
- PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports) –Students are encouraged and rewarded for clearly identified positive behaviors through incentives.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid- Designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, health and human service workers how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.
- Project Echo – A telementoring model that supports case-based learning and provides specialty training for education professionals supporting youth with serious behavioral health needs.
- Questioning, Persuade, Refer – Similar to CPR training, this program is designed to teach students, families, schools staff and the community how to recognize the warning signs of suicidal behavior and question, persuade and refer someone to mental health assistance.
- Restorative Practices – RSCD Restorative Team partners with schools, families and community organizations who commit to study and implement restorative practices by building relationships, coaching, applying research-based tools and reflectively planning for change.
- RSCD RocRestorative Student Leaders - RocRestorative is committed to collaboration and partnership in all aspects of Restorative Practices. Empowered student voices guarantee we are working with each other to support a restorative community. Students are taught and trained in restorative language and mindset.

- Pathways to Peace – Pathways to Peace is a City of Rochester managed youth violence prevention and intervention program designed to strengthen and reinforce on-going initiatives to lower suspension and improve attendance. The program provides social emotional check-ins, restorative circles, referrals, conflict resolution, gang interventions/preventative services and re-engagement support.
- Help Zones – Assist students to regroup using support and self-control, to reflect on choices and behaviors, to repair any damages their choices may have caused, to return to scheduled classes as quickly as possible. Help Zone staff are trained in Restorative Practices, de-escalation skills, and Crisis as an Opportunity.
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS) – Provides a crisis prevention and intervention model for residential childcare organizations that will assist in: preventing crises from occurring, de-escalating potential crises, effectively managing acute crises, reducing potential and actual injury to children and staff and learning constructive ways to handle stressful situations.
- Crisis Prevention Institute Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI) – School Safety Officers and designated District staff are trained in non-violent crisis intervention.
- Trauma, Illness and Grief Team (TIG) – Responds to crisis situations in the District and provides education and support as needed.
- Mental Health Services – The District offers numerous avenues of mental health services to students, families and staff. Some of these services and programs include an emergency mental health protocol, mobile mental health teams, school-based health centers, mental health satellite clinics and student support centers.
- Healing, Understanding, and Belonging (H.U.B.) – The H.U.B. is facilitated by the Department of School Climate and Culture in collaboration with Student Support Services. The H.U.B. is a space for building community, navigating conflict and restoring relationships. The program aims to break down barriers to support student and family needs in and out of school.
- Alternative schools and programs – Alternative schools and programs provide students with alternatives to traditional educational settings. Examples are short-term in-school programs for students that serve as a consequence for a wide variety of conduct issues.
- Remote Support Teams are coordinated through the Department of Equity, Inclusion and Social Emotional Support. The teams are designed to assist students and staff in a culturally responsive manner, to cope with disruptive behaviors and critical incidents resulting from a school or community related crisis and return to normal routines as quickly and calmly as possible following a disruption of the educational process. Any behavior or concern that the Building Administration may feel rises above the ability of the building to manage, may contact the Remote Support Team. Concerns are reported telephonically or through email. Reports may be submitted anonymously and will remain confidential to the extent legally possible. The nature of the threat will determine the information collected, the investigative process, and the school/District and community supports and outreaches identified for the students, families and staff as needed. Violence prevention training may occur to students, families and staff as needed or required by statute.

- Rochester Threat Advisory Committee (ROCTAC) – ROCTAC’s work is a collaborative and involves active participation by a multi-disciplinary team of trained representatives from business, mental health professionals, social service agencies, law enforcement and school district staff focused on targeted violence prevention. Following a referral and assessment by the District’s Remote Support Team and the Office of Safety and Security, should the team determine that the threat is beyond the scope of the school or District, and in consultation with District leadership, a referral to ROCTAC may occur.
- Other program examples include Home Hospital Instruction, the Rochester International Academy and All City High.

B. Training, Drills and Exercises

Training

The District understands the importance of training and preparation. School staff, students and other identified individuals and groups will receive training during the school year to better prepare themselves for an incident. The annual training will include a review of district-wide school safety, individual building-level emergency response and Emergency Response Procedures. The staff are also briefed on their roles, responsibilities and communication procedures during an emergency. The District annually submits certification to NYSED that all District and school staff have undergone annual training components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year receive training within 30 days of hire. All staff at the beginning of the school year receive this training by September 15th.

Multi-Hazard Training

The District will provide annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students. The components of this training will be consistent District-wide. Staff training will be routinely conducted at the school level to include drills with the entire school population. These drills will focus on our standard response procedures to a potentially threatening incident to include: early dismissal, hold-in-place procedures, shelter-in-place procedures, and evacuation, lockout, and lockdown procedures. The use of tabletop drills to compliment this training will be considered to increase the training needs and standards.

Drills and Exercises

At a minimum, each school will conduct the following exercises/drills annually:

- Section 807 of the New York State Education Law mandates twelve (12) emergency drills each school year to prepare students to be able to respond appropriately in the event of a sudden emergency. The statute requires that eight (8) of these drills be evacuation drills with the remaining four (4) as lockdown drills. Six (6) evacuation drills and two (2) of the lockdown drills are conducted between the first day of the school year and December 31st. The remaining two evacuation and two lockdown drills are conducted between the end of the Winter Recess and June 1st. Four of the evacuation drills must incorporate an alternate egress route. Two additional evacuations drills are conducted at school buildings which host summer programs. Drills shall be conducted at different times of the school day. Students and staff must receive instruction in the procedures to be followed should an emergency occur, such as an evacuation or a lockdown, during a lunch period or an assembly, if a drill is not conducted during one of these events.

- 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 (3) states each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan shall be tested including sheltering and early dismissal (no earlier than 15 minutes before normal dismissal). The District will ensure that each school conducts drills and other exercises to test the components of their Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.
- Mandatory evacuation and lockdown drills must continue along statutory schedules as established by NYSED. Drills and training will be conducted in a trauma-informed, developmentally, and age-appropriate manner. Drills and training will not include the use of props, actors, simulations, or any other tactic intended to mimic a school shooting, incident of violence or other emergency. Staff should debrief and evaluate the drill with students and other staff as needed and allow time to answer questions and address concerns. Suggestions for improvements to the drills should be considered, thus allowing for a more efficient response during an actual emergency.
- Lockdown drills will be conducted internally to ensure that school staff have the ability to secure the facility and students against an immediate threat to life and safety. Such drills will cause minimal interruption to academic activities and will involve the clearance of hallways, locking of classrooms and positioning of students and staff in pre-designated “safe areas” within each room.
- Students and staff will be notified that the school is conducting a drill by use of an announcement at the beginning of a drill or training event, except for an evacuation drill. Evacuation drills are not announced per New York State Fire Code. This will be done over the public address system and through the building staff as needed. An example may be, *“This is a drill, not an actual emergency. This is a drill. We are now practicing how to evacuate the building. This is a drill.”* When applicable and if it can be done in a safe manner, students and staff will be notified that of a real emergency and not a drill through an announcement. An example may be, *“This is NOT a drill, this is an actual emergency. This is not a drill. Please evacuate the building.”* Whenever a lockdown drill is conducted, school staff should ensure the students and other staff know that it is simply a drill and not a real-life event. This will help to ensure that law enforcement and parents/guardians are not inadvertently alarmed that a real-life incident is occurring. School administration is encouraged to notify the Department of Safety and Security of planned drills and to include local emergency responders. Additionally, a sign or notice will be placed at all public entrances indicating that a drill is in progress and to wait for its conclusion. This will serve to notify any uninformed parents or visitors of the drill and prevent unwarranted panic.
- Parents and/or guardians will be notified at least seven (7) days prior to any drill.
- Schools shall incorporate strategies and techniques to accommodate students who may need additional support during drills according to documented needs or as have been reported to the school by a parent and/or guardian, or otherwise identified by the school. These additional supports will be determined on a case by case basis.
- Where possible, the school should seek out opportunities to conduct full-scale response exercises with law enforcement. In the event the District or a building will participate in a full-scale emergency exercise in coordination with local emergency agencies that includes props, actors, or simulations or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting, or other act of violence or emergency, the exercise will not occur during the regular school day or when other after school activities are occurring, such as athletic events. Such exercises will not include students without written consent from parents or persons in parental relations.

- Principals are required to submit their evacuation and lock down drill tracking forms to Department of Educational Facilities, Office of Plant Operations quarterly.

C. Implementation of School Security

As described in the District's Code of Conduct, all members of each school's community share a responsibility in promoting and maintaining a safe and orderly school environment. Some of the more specific measures are expanded upon below.

Security Personnel – Hiring and Training

Rochester City School District School Safety Officers (SSOs) are hired consistent with the requirements and standards set forth by the Rochester City School District and New York State Department of Education. All SSOs are licensed by New York State consistent with the requirements set forth by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Annual and continual training is provided to maintain licensing and skills. The Rochester City School District is a licensed New York State Security Guard Training School and provides the annual NYS Security Guard refresher course to its SSOs. The SSO annual training includes, but not limited to, topics such as Restorative Practices, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools, Crisis Prevention Institute Non-Violent Intervention, youth mental health, CPR, first aid and x-rays scanners.

Security Personnel – Responsibilities and Authority

The District employs security personnel to assist the schools in dealing with all matters of security and safety issues. The principle role of our security personnel is to safeguard the District's students, staff and visitors from harm; to deter, detect, respond to, and report infractions of the District Code of Conduct and New York State Law; and to protect the District's assets from theft and damage. Security personnel employed by the District are authorized to carry out this role consistent with the Policies and Regulations of the District, applicable New York State Law and District training.

Visitor Access

School access will be controlled during the regular school day by securing the building and utilizing one point of entry with a buzzer/intercom/camera system to screen visitors prior to entrance into the building. Consistent with RCSD policy and Code of Conduct, an approved visitor to a school will present valid government issued photo identification and be given a pass prior to gaining access to the building. All visitors and non-District personnel will be screened upon entry into a District building utilizing the Raptor Visitor Management System, should the visitor be entering the building beyond the main office or main point of entry. This system will assist in ensuring the safety of students, staff, and other visitors by screening individuals against local and national sex offender databases. In the event of a confirmed offender, any allowance into the building will be determined by the building principal/administrator in coordination with RCSD Safety and Security, if necessary. All District employees are required to wear identification at all times.

Video Surveillance

All District buildings provide video surveillance to enhance the safety of our students and staff. The cameras may or may not be actively monitored, but the recordings are available for District officials and local law enforcement use.

Intrusion Detection

The District's buildings are protected by an intrusion detection alarm system that is linked to a central monitoring station.

D. Vital Educational Agency Information

The District maintains certain information about each school building within the District including, but not limited to: school populations, transportation needs, and phone numbers of key personnel. In addition, similar information on other District departments, as well as the assets that those departments could provide in the event of an emergency, is also maintained at the District level.

E. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The District acknowledges the importance of early recognition and intervention into conflicts and potentially violent behaviors.

- The District will ensure that appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training programs will be provided and incorporated into teacher conference days and provided to all staff during regularly scheduled staff training sessions. All threats of violence are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- We recognize that despite our best efforts, students and parents may need additional assistance to respond to bullying. To ensure a quick response to parent and student concerns, the District has developed a bullying reporting process. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with school or District staff and report any suspected bullying incident. Each school annually designates a Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Coordinator.
- Students and staff are encouraged to share information regarding any conflicts or potentially violent behaviors with an administrator (and law enforcement when appropriate) so an investigation can commence. The District has established an
- anonymous 24-hour "Safe School Helpline" to provide another means for such information to be brought to the attention of those who need to know so that the situation can be addressed in a timely manner.
- The District has developed guidelines and processes for contacting parents, guardians or persons in a parental relation to a student in the event of an implied or direct threat of violence by a student against themselves, including threat of suicide.
- District-wide intervention strategies and programs are listed in Section A. These strategies and programs are consistent with the District Code of Conduct.

F. Hazard Identification

The list of sites of potential emergencies include all District buildings, playground areas, properties adjacent to schools, on and off-site athletic fields, buses and off-site field trip locations. The potential identified hazards, and how to manage each, are documented in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The list may be expanded as additional hazards are identified.

DISTRICT RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

A. District Emergency Response Team (DERT)

During an emergency, the District Emergency Response Team shall function under the command of the Superintendent, Chief Emergency Officer or Incident Commander. This team is responsible for resource assistance and management during emergencies as necessary.

B. Superintendent's Executive Cabinet

The Superintendent's Executive Cabinet includes Deputy Superintendent's, all District Chiefs and any other specially designated individuals. This group may be activated to provide assistance to any building or crisis situation.

C. Chief Emergency Officer

The Superintendent and/or Chief of Operations is the designated Chief Emergency Officer. The Chief Emergency Officer in coordination with the Director of Safety and Security and the District Emergency Response Planning Coordinator are responsible for numerous duties and responsibilities surrounding emergency planning and response. They are responsible to coordinate communication between school staff, law enforcement and other first responders. The Chief Emergency Officer leads the efforts of the District-Wide School Safety Team in its annual review and update of the District-Wide School Safety Plan. The Department of Safety and Security coordinates safety, security and emergency training for District and school staff to include the annual emergency response plan overview. The Emergency Response Planning Coordinator assists all schools with annual updates and completion of Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. The designated Chief Emergency Officer coordinates with multiple departments to include Safety and Security, Transportation and Information Technology to evaluate and select appropriate security related technology and any corresponding procedures.

D. Command Post

During an emergency, the Superintendent or Chief Emergency Officer may activate the District Emergency Response Team. When necessary, a Command Post location will be designated and established. In addition to the District Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent or Chief Emergency Officer may summon additional cabinet members and resources to report to this location. The Command Post location may vary depending on the type and extent of the incident.

E. District Data and Contacts

Routine updates to District data and contacts are available to key personnel (including all building principals), but is not available to the general public.

F. District-Wide School Safety Team

The District-Wide School Safety Team will meet biannually to discuss school safety issues under the direction of the Chief Emergency Officer/Director of School Safety and Security. Additional meetings may be scheduled if a serious incident occurs, the District-Wide School Safety Plan needs to be updated, or any other identified special need. The team will consist of staff members from across the District who consult with emergency responders and community members and include members from District Operations, Board of Education, Safety and Security, Student Services, Teacher, Administrator, Rochester Association of Paraprofessionals, Board of Education Non-Teaching Employees and Parent Organizations, Transportation, Facilities, and the Auditor General office. This team will make recommendations to the Superintendent and Chief Emergency Officer regarding school safety issues. The team will also be responsible for annual updates to the District-Wide School Safety Plan for submission to the Board of Education for annual adoption.

Questions or comments for the District-Wide School Safety Team, the District-Wide School Safety Plan, or general District-wide safety concerns may be sent to RCSDSafetyandSecurityPublicComment@RCSDK12.org or by calling the Office of Safety and Security at (585) 262-8600.

GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Subsequent sections of this District-Wide School Safety Plan outline specific response actions for individual and specific emergency situations. If an emergency situation occurs at the building-level, it is the responsibility of each and every District employee to take those actions which are geared toward preserving the health and safety of all students and staff.

At the conclusion of a critical incident or emergency, the Incident Commander should ensure an incident report or summary of events is written for reporting to the Superintendent or Chief Emergency Officer. The extent of the report will be determined by the scope of the event, or as directed by the Superintendent or Chief Emergency Officer.

A. Concept of Operations

The overall strategy of the District-Wide School Safety Plan and Building-Level Emergency Response Plans is to execute effective and timely decisions and actions that prevent harm, protect lives and property, mitigate damages, restore order, and aid recovery. These plans are based upon the concept that the incident management functions that must be performed by the school staff generally parallel some of their daily routine functions. To the extent possible, the same personnel and material resources used for daily activities will be employed during incidents. Personnel and equipment resources are limited, so some routine functions that do not contribute directly to the incident may be suspended. The personnel, equipment, and supplies that would typically be required from those routine functions will be redirected to accomplish assigned incident management tasks.

Implementation of the Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all incidents and major planned events and drills. In general, the initial Incident Commander at the school will be the building principal and is delegated the authority to direct all incident activities within the school's jurisdiction. The Incident Commander will establish an Incident Command Post (ICP), as necessary, and provide an assessment of the situation to the emergency responders, identify incident management resources required, and direct the on-scene incident management activities from the ICP. If no Incident Commander is present at the onset of the incident, the most qualified individual will assume command until relieved by a more qualified Incident Commander. A defined chain of command is included within each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

Initial Response

School personnel are most likely to be the first on the scene of an incident in a school setting. Staff are expected to respond as appropriate and notify the principal, or designee, of an incident. Command may be transferred to a more qualified school staff member and/or to an emergency response agency with legal authority to assume responsibility (Police, Fire or EMS, dependent upon the nature of the incident) upon their arrival at the school. Staff will seek guidance and direction from the school, District and emergency responders. Any school or District staff member in a building that sees or is aware of an emergency shall activate the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

B. Building-Level Emergency Response Plans (BLERPs)

Each Rochester City School District Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be developed by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team under the guidance of the Chief Emergency Officer. [8 NYCRR Section 155.17 \(b\) and 155.17 \(c\) \(2\)](#) - requires that each school shall have a Building-Level Emergency Response Team that consists of representatives from the following groups: teacher, administrator, parent organizations, school safety personnel, other school personnel including bus driver, monitor or transportation official, community members, local law enforcement officials, local ambulance or other emergency response agencies, and any other representatives the Board of Education or other governing body deems appropriate. A Building-Level Emergency Response Team and Post Incident Response Team will also be appointed by the principal or administrator annually.

The Building-Level Emergency Response Team is responsible for the overall development, maintenance, and revision of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan (BLERP) and for coordinating training and exercising the school BLERP. Team members are expected to work closely together to make recommendations for revising and enhancing the plan.

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans will be on file and updated annually with the City of Rochester Police Department and the New York State Police. BLERPs will remain confidential, including but not limited to the floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the immediate surrounding area. The plans are not be subject to disclosure under Article Six of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law and shall not be disclosed except to authorized department or school staff, and law enforcement officers.

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans will include detailed guidance and directions for the following situations:

Response Annexes

- Shelter in Place - Response
- Hold in Place - Response
- Evacuation - Response
- Lockout - Response
- Lockdown - Response

Functional Annexes

- Accounting for All Persons
- Communications
- Continuity of Operations
- Recovery
- Reunification
- Security

Threat Specific Annexes

Abuse Recognition and
Prevention
Active Violent Behavior
After-hours
Animal
Anthrax
Assaults/Fights
Bomb Threats
Building Events
Bus Incident/Accident
Cold Emergencies
Common Childhood Illnesses
Crime Scene Management
Cyber Threat
Field Trip
Fire
Food Defense
Functional Needs
Gas
General Emergency
HAZMAT
Heat Emergencies
Intruder/Hostage
MCI
Mechanical Emergencies
Medical and Mental Health
Missing/Lost Child
Pandemic
Opioid Crisis
Radiologic Event
Safe Room/Area of Refuge
Serious Injury/Death
Student Unrest
Sudden Cardiac Arrest
Suicide/Threat of Suicide
Threat of Violence
Weapons
Weather/Natural Disaster

C. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The Incident Commander is not expected to manage all of the aspects associated with an incident without assistance. The school relies on other key school personnel to perform tasks that will help manage the incident and ensure the safety of students and staff during a crisis or incident. The Incident Command System (ICS) uses a team approach to manage incidents. It is difficult to form a team while a crisis or incident is unfolding. Roles should be pre-assigned based on training and qualifications. Each staff member and volunteer must be familiar with his or her role and responsibilities before an incident occurs. The Building-Level Emergency Response Team and Post-Incident Response Team will be used to fill these roles.

D. Direction, Control, and Coordination

Coordination with Responders

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans identify emergency response agencies and the means to contact them for emergency and non-emergency situations. The District maintains a positive working relationship with all emergency response agencies within the District and have regular communication with their leadership. The Department of Safety and Security will coordinate biannual safety meetings with the Rochester Police and Fire Departments. Additional meetings may be scheduled if a serious incident occurs or any other identified special need. Each school may maintain additional school specific agreements with outside agencies as necessary for its students. These agreements will specify the means of communication and services to be provided. In the event of an incident involving outside responders, a transfer of command from the school Incident Commander should occur and the establishment of unified command with the responding agencies.

Use of Resources

The school will use its own resources and equipment to respond to incidents until emergency responders arrive. The District will assist the schools in securing necessary resources.

E. Administration, Finance and Logistics

Agreements and Contracts

If school resources prove to be inadequate during an incident, the school may request assistance from the District. Additional assistance may be requested from local emergency agencies, or other agencies, in accordance with an existing Memoranda of Understanding. Such assistance includes equipment, supplies and personnel. All agreements entered into are authorized by District and school officials.

F. Communications During Emergencies

The school and District will maintain communications with parents, the media and emergency responders during an incident. The School Incident Commander or Chief Emergency Officer will work with the District's Chief Communications Officer/Public Information Officer and emergency responders to coordinate the release of information ensuring that information is consistent, accurate and timely. Communication procedures are detailed further in the Building Level Emergency Response Plans and include but are not limited to individual phone calls, Robo calls,

emails and letters home to parents and guardians. During an emergency, access to a school building or classroom by parents or guardians may be limited and will be determined by the Incident Commander.

G. Multi-Hazard Response

There are many variables that could impact the manner in which the School and/or District Emergency Response Team responds to a particular occurrence. These variables could include but are not limited to: time of year, time of day, weather, and age of student involved, location of student, anticipated delay from emergency responders, availability of support personnel, and availability of transportation. General Incident Command procedures are followed for every incident. Specific decisions are made based on the particular incident. Incident Commanders focus on critical decisions that need to be made in every emergency pursuant to our primary goal of preventing the loss of life and injury of students and school staff.

The building principal or their designee is designated as the Incident Commander of their school during a crisis situation until relieved by a higher authority. The principal or designee will provide leadership, organize activities and disseminate information with the assistance of the Building-Level Emergency Response Team or District Chief Emergency Officer.

In most instances where a school level response is warranted, the school may seek assistance from other emergency responders in resolving the situation. As such, the immediate objective is to contain the incident and successfully manage the situation until the emergency personnel arrive.

H. Emergency Notifications

Notification of significant events or events that required a call to 9-1-1 shall be made to the appropriate Chief of Schools, Chief Emergency Officer or Director of Safety and Security in accordance with the District's Emergency Incident Report Framework. Further notifications to the Superintendent, District Emergency Response Team, Executive Cabinet and/or Board of Education will be conducted in accordance with District guidance. These notifications shall occur at the earliest and safest possible time during the response phase. Additional resources may be requested in order to more efficiently and effectively deal with an incident.

I. Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

The recognition and early intervention into potentially violent situations is critical, it shall be the practice of the District to handle all threats and potentially threatening situations or circumstances in a serious and deliberate manner. In addition to reporting and investigating direct threats, all staff are responsible for relaying to their school administration information about any student behaviors or communications that suggest a threatening situation is possible.

Depending on the imminent nature of the threat, the following procedures may be used by the District:

- Use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Inform building principal or designee of implied or direct threat or concerning behaviors or communications.
- Contact 9-1-1 if the threat may be imminent. Direct threats to personal safety may necessitate an immediate response by law enforcement.
- The building principal or designee may initiate a threat assessment inquiry to attempt to determine the level and credibility of a threat.

- As time permits, this inquiry will involve interviewing potential witnesses as well as the individuals involved. Some factors to consider when evaluating the level of threat include, but are not limited to, specificity of threat to a person or persons, mention of specific means or access to weapons, specific reason or justification and history of the student.
- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate, and include the possible use of the counseling and social work staff.
- Follow up with the appropriate procedures as outlined in the District's Code of Conduct.
- Additional response guidelines are outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

J. Acts of Violence

When an act of violence has occurred involving school students or staff, the principal or designee must quickly obtain all essential information to determine the degree of threat or danger and decide on what actions might mitigate further risk. General non-specific actions may include:

- Call 9-1-1 and notify Chief of Schools, Chief Emergency Officer or Director of Safety and Security.
- Isolate the immediate area and initiate appropriate Functional and/or Threat Specific Annexes (e.g. Lockdown, Lockout, Crime Scene Management, etc.) if necessary.
- Identify and separate the involved persons if possible.
- Monitor situation; adjust response as necessary. Initiate additional Functional or Threat Specific Annexes as appropriate.
- Follow the District's designated notification process.
- Additional response guidelines are outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

K. Threat and Hazard Specific Response

The District has established appropriate response annexes to a variety of emergency situations. The response guidelines are detailed in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan as recommended by the NYSED Safe Schools Template. Acknowledging that some responses may be managed at the District level, these larger and more encompassing emergencies will involve all schools to some degree. Building-Level Emergency Response Plans will continue to include these annexes to ensure consistency and knowledge of responses at the school level. The Rochester City School District Department of Transportation maintains transportation safety guidelines and procedures.

L. Obtaining Advice and Assistance from the Local Government

In the event of an emergency where additional advice, assistance or assets not readily available to the District, the Superintendent, Chief of Schools or Chief Emergency Officer will activate the District Emergency Response Team to help provide needed assistance. The Rochester City School District is partnered with the City of Rochester and its subdivisions (police, fire etc.) for specific circumstances. In the event of a major disaster, NYS Executive Law, Article 2.B., section 24 may apply. The City or County Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) may be activated for incidents impacting the community, to which the Rochester City School District may be part of. The activities of the EOCs will be coordinated by the Office of Emergency Management.

M. District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

The District has identified District-based resources which may be available during an emergency. These resources are available through the District Emergency Response Team and District leadership. Resources requested will be dependent upon the nature and extent of the incident or crisis and may include transportation or student support services or student counselors.

N. Response and Functional Annexes

Response and functional Annexes focus on the critical operational functions and courses of action designed to carry them out. In New York State, to ensure consistency, schools are provided with standardized definitions. These annexes are defined in detail in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. Additional details are available on the attached District-Wide School Safety Plan Annexes.

O. Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes

Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes focus on the critical operational functions and courses of action designed to carry them out. These annexes identify a variety of potential incidents that a school may face and provide guidance to school and District staff on how to manage the incidents. Annexes are updated and added as identified and needed. Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes are defined in detail in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. Additional details are available on the attached District-Wide School Safety Plan Annexes.

P. Crime Scene Management

Evidence is critical to the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. Therefore, only trained professionals should do the collection and preservation of evidence. Before those professionals arrive, it is important that the crime scene remain as uncontaminated as possible. There are things that can be done by people who arrive at the scene first to help protect the evidence. Specific crime scene management procedures are outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.

Q. Emergency Evacuation of Non-Ambulatory, Disabled or Individuals with Disabilities

Each building principal is responsible for identifying non-ambulatory, disabled staff or students and any individual with a disability. The principal is responsible for assigning an area of rescue for such persons unable to evacuate the building in close proximity to an evacuation stairwell, as possible. A staff member should be assigned to assist the individuals that are located there. This information will be a part of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan and available to local emergency responders for use during an emergency.

R. Accounting for All Persons

The safety and security of our students is of paramount importance. This includes knowing the location of all students whom have been entrusted to the District and schools during the school day. This includes the time from bus pick-up or arrival at schools through the time students are

dropped off at home by the District or have left the campus under normal circumstances. The District emphasizes the importance of timely and accurate attendance taken for each classroom and throughout the school day. The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan has procedures in place to:

- Report to the principal or administration when a student, staff member or guest cannot be located.
- Take attendance and report to the Incident Commander when class relocates inside the building or an evacuation takes place.
- Detailed guidelines are outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan and is in line with the District's Wandering and Elopement policy.

S. Family Reunification Plans

Any incident has the potential for students and staff to have to leave the school building to an identified alternate location. Due to this potential, it is important for each school to have a family reunification plan. Families should be reunified at each building's evacuation site and will require assigned personnel and plans. The District Emergency Response Team will assist with any family reunification situation. Detailed guidelines are included in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

T. Crisis Occurring Outside of Normal School Hours

There are many groups and programs that utilize District facilities during non-school hours. Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure the leadership of the after-hours groups understand the District and school emergency procedures and evacuation locations. The individual responsible for the school-based activity at the building is considered the Incident Commander and will activate the Emergency Response Plan.

If there is a community-based organization hosting a program, then it is the principal's responsibility to brief the program leader on the emergency plan.

For official after-school programs such those conducted through the City of Rochester Department of Recreation, the program does have an emergency response plan, however, the principal is responsible for reviewing the building plan with the program coordinator to ensure that appropriate contacts and follow-up reports are completed for RCSD. Once an incident is identified to have occurred, notifications should follow normal District policies.

For after-school programs conducted through the City of Rochester Department of Recreation, the program follows their emergency response plan protocol. However, the program is responsible for communicating the outcome to the principal to ensure that appropriate follow-up and reports are completed for RCSD if applicable. Once an incident is identified to have occurred, notifications should follow normal District policies.

U. Pandemic Response Plan

The District Pandemic Response Plan is an all-encompassing preventative pandemic response framework that addresses precautions to prevent, mitigate, prepare, and recover from a pandemic or epidemic emergency or situation within the Rochester City School District and surrounding community. The Pandemic Response Plan is maintained by Student Health Services. The District will work closely with the Commissioner of Health to contain, prevent and respond to infectious

diseases in the school district as well as the community in general. While preparing and responding to infectious disease, the District will seek out and adhere to all guidance received from local, state and federal public health authorities as it pertains to continuity of operations, social distancing and personal protective equipment guidelines.

In accordance with New York Education Law § 2801-a(2)(m) and New York Labor Law § 27-c, the Rochester City School District drafts the Public Health Emergency Communicable Disease Protocols (the “Protocols”) to guide District employees and the community in preparation for and in response to a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The Protocols will be adopted by the Board of Education, maintained and updated annually as necessary by the Office of Safety and Security, and posted to the District’s website.

V. Opioid Crisis

The opioid public health emergency is a nationwide crisis that affects all aspects of every community. In preparation for emergency opioid situations, all District health offices are equipped with nasal naloxone. School health staff as well as the District School Safety Officers have been trained in naloxone use and will continue to receive annual training. Student and staff support, mental health and addiction resources are available if and when any drug or alcohol abuse or addiction situations are identified. Drug use emergencies will be managed under the Medical and Mental Health Annex.

W. Procedures for Informing Other Educational Agencies of an Emergency

The Chief Emergency Officer and Director of Safety and Security will evaluate the impact of an emergency on other educational agencies within the School District. If the impact is evident, the Chief Emergency Officer or Director of Safety and Security will coordinate communication with the contact person at each affected educational agency and inform them of the status of the emergency. If contact with other educational agencies cannot be made, the Chief Emergency Officer or Director of Safety and Security will contact the Rochester Police Department and RCSD Mobile Units or Road Patrol for assistance in communicating information to these educational facilities. If transportation, sheltering and other types of assistance are to be provided to other educational agencies, the Chief Emergency Officer and/or Director of Safety and Security will make arrangements to implement this assistance.

X. Procedures for Sheltering Students, Staff and Visitors

In the event that it becomes necessary to shelter students, staff, visitors, or other individuals, the building principal or their designee will contact their Chief of Schools, Chief Emergency Office or Director of Safety and Security in accordance with District guidelines. Internal District notifications will take place in accordance with District guidelines. If it becomes apparent that students will not be able to leave the facility, the school principal will make arrangements for adequate supervision of the students under their direction and to make provisions for building maintenance (custodial) and food services. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Emergency Officer to inform appropriate police, Red Cross, and emergency preparedness officials. District resources will be requested and provided in accordance with District guidelines. The District has also partnered with different local and state agencies to provide shelter to the community during certain disasters or emergencies. The District is part of the City of Rochester Emergency Plan for sheltering and additional resources, as needed. The Chief Emergency Officer is the contact for those agencies during the crisis and will take appropriate actions during such incidents.

Y. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

The COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis emphasized the importance of a comprehensive Continuity of Operations Plan. During any crisis event, the Superintendent, or designee, shall appoint a Leadership Team, Taskforce or Working Groups to assist in the management of the crisis as needed. Plans and documents developed in response to a crisis will be maintained by the appointed group and be made available as needed. For example, the RCSD COVID response and safety plans, as well as reopening plans, are maintained by the RCSD COVID Taskforce and the Superintendent's office. Plans available to the public may be posted on the RCSD website under the relevant department such as Safety and Security or Student Health Services. The Rochester City School District will help ensure that essential functions will continue during an emergency and its immediate aftermath. Essential functions include business services (payroll and purchasing), communication (internal and external), computer and systems support, facilities maintenance, safety and security, and continuity of teaching and learning. Each department and school will maintain and ensure the District's overall ability to continue with teaching and learning of our students as well as District business operations for the duration of any crisis situation. COOP plans are fluid and will follow all local, state and federal guidelines as required and necessary. Detailed COOP plans are located in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

As part of the COOP, The District will use resources to:

- Identify primary and secondary relocation sites for each building that meet the needs of school;
- Allow the COOP to be activated at any time and sustained for the duration of the crisis;
- Continuing or re-establishing essential functions, such as restoration of school and District operations, teaching and learning, food service, and maintaining the health and safety of our students, staff and the RCSD community as a whole;
- Ensuring students receive applicable related services in the event of a prolonged closure;
- Protect vital documents and make them available at alternate sites;
- Identify personnel to assist in developing and operating the COOP.

Z. Recovery

District Support for Buildings

The District will use all resources at its disposal to support the District Emergency Response Team, Building-Level Emergency Response Teams and the Post-Incident Response Teams in the affected school(s) after the incident has been resolved to the point where normal operations can resume. Additional support includes but is not limited to mental health services, building security and facility restoration.

Disaster Mental Health Services

The District Department of Student Support Services will coordinate resources and support as needed during a disaster or crisis. Each school maintains a Post-Incident Response Team at the building level and this is detailed in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. This may take

the form of seeking additional local support or accessing federal and state mental health resources, as needed. The crisis and the needs will help dictate the supports and services necessary.

Post-Incident Response

Each RCSD school maintains a Building-Level Post-Incident Response Team. After the safety and status of students, staff and visitors has been assured and emergency conditions have resolved following an incident, staff, teachers and school officials will assemble to support the restoration of the school's educational programs. Defining mission-critical operations and staffing this effort is the starting point for the recovery process. Collecting and disseminating information will also facilitate the recovery process.

Trauma, Illness and Grief Team (TIG)

The District TIG team is a group of counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses and other staff members who have received specialized training in responding to the emotional needs of students, teachers and other school personnel, which arise from trauma, violence, illness, grief or loss. The TIG team is responsible for coordinating District crisis team activities. This team will also oversee the initial and on-going training program for all building crisis teams and maintain records.

AA. Remote Instruction

The Department of Information Management and Technology (IM&T) along with the Department of Accountability survey families and students and review school data to determine which students have access to digital devices and connectivity; and identify those students whom need access. IM&T coordinates with schools to ensure the devices are delivered to those students whom are found to need the devices.

Provisions of special education and related services will be in accordance with student individual education plans. As needed, a Committee on Special Education will convene to review and assess student specific needs. All attempts will be made to deliver services as provided in the individual education plan. Special assistive technology is provided as needed and in accordance with individual education plans. Extended remote education plans and expectations will be based on the nature and planned extent of the closure of a school(s).

The Department of Information Management and Technology reports the status of student access to devices annually on the Basic Education Data System (BEDS) and the Digital Equity Survey as required.

Additional details are available on the attached Remote Instruction Plan.

BB. Workplace Violence Prevention

The Rochester City School District is committed to the safety and security of our employees. We understand that workplace violence may present a serious occupational safety hazard to our organization, staff, and students.

Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of their employment including but not limited to an attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee; any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm; intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without their

consent that entails some injury; or stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Acts of violence against any of our employees where any work-related duty is performed will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including involving law enforcement authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as clients and visitors, following all policies, procedures and practices, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of New York State Labor Law Art. 2 §27-b and highlights some of the elements that are found within our Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The process involved in complying with this law includes a workplace evaluation that is designed to identify the risks of workplace violence to which our employees could be exposed. Authorized Employee Representative(s) will, at a minimum, be involved in:

1. evaluating the physical environment;
2. developing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program; and
3. reviewing workplace violence incident reports at least annually to identify trends in the types of incidents replied, if any, and reviewing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

All employees will participate in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program. The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in our workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to as quickly as possible upon notification. All personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

As this is a new requirement for School Districts across New York State, the evaluation of the physical environment and training program are currently being complete. Once finalized, the District Workplace Violence Program will be published on the District website and all staff will be notified of its location.

Title: Chief of Human Capital or Designee

Department: Human Capital

Phone: (585) 262-8384

E-mail: Compliance@RCSDK12.org

CC. Definitions

Trauma means an emotional response to a deeply distressing or disturbing experience such as, but not limited to, an act of violence, natural disaster, abuse, neglect or loss.

Trauma-informed means an understanding of trauma and how it affects the physical, emotional, and mental health of students and adults.

Trauma-informed drills means avoiding tactics in training or drills that may introduce or activate trauma, such as use of props, actors, simulations, or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting, incident of violence, or other emergency, or inclusion of developmentally or age-appropriate content. Drills may inadvertently prompt a negative emotional or psychological response in staff or students because of previous exposure(s) to trauma.

RESOURCES

The Rochester City School District, represented by the Superintendent, and the Board of Education, supports the following authorities in the compliance for Rochester City School District emergency planning and management:

- Rochester City School District Code of Conduct <http://www.rcsdk12.org/domain/16>
- RCSD Human Capital Initiatives-Harassment, Intimidation & Bully Reporting Process and Form <http://www.rcsdk12.org/report>
- 34 CFR 104.4 - Discrimination prohibited http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=1ba9a94cba024d10c834ef0a659cba20&node=se34.1.104_14&rqn=div8
- 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 (New York State Project SAVE-Safe Schools Against Violence in Education) http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/Laws_Regs/8NYCRR155.htm
- NYSED Code 2801-a – Chapter 16, Title II, Article 55 – School Safety Plans <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/lawsregs/2801a.html>
- NYSED Law 807 – Fire and Emergency Drills http://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/FireSafety/FireDrillFreq_120309.htm
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) <http://www.ada.gov>
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) <http://www.dhs.gov/publication/homeland-security-presidential-directive-5>
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8) <https://www.dhs.gov/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness>
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/index.htm>
- New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code-Title 19 NYCRR 1220-1226, 1240 <https://dos.ny.gov/laws-and-regulations-division-building-standards-and-codes>
- New York State Article 2-B <https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/06/nys-executive-law-article-2b.pdf>
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/15271?fromSearch=fromsearch&id=3564>
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 <http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/coord/titlevi.php>
- Rochester City School District Policies <https://www.rcsdk12.org/domain/22>

