

# **SOUTHWESTERN CSD Districtwide School Safety Plan 2023-2024**

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*Commissioner's Regulation 155.17*

## **Introduction**

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. Districts are required to develop a Districtwide School Safety Plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The Districtwide plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed Emergency Response Plans (ERP) required at the school building level. Districts are at risk of a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and technological disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. This component of Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses risk reduction/prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in the school district and its schools.

Describe the process used by the district in developing this school safety plan, including any strategies such as community or student involvement and collaboration. The district may describe the data or process used for needs assessment and implementation of the plan to meet the individualized needs of the district in keeping with the intent of Project SAVE.

The Southwestern Central School District supports the SAVE Legislation, and intends to engage in a planning process. The Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates on-going Districtwide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

# Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines

## A. Purpose

The Southwestern Districtwide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Southwestern Central School District Board of Education, the Superintendent of Southwestern Central School District appointed a Districtwide School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the Districtwide School Safety Plan.

## B. Identification of School Teams

The Southwestern Central School District has appointed a Districtwide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the School Board, students, teachers, administrators, parent organizations, school safety personnel; law enforcement, and other first responders.

Kurt Gustafson	Board of Education
Rich Rybicki	Administrator
Lisa Kyler	Elementary School Counselor
Shelby Williams	Middle School Counselor
Alexis Crytzer	High School Counselor
Chelsey Winchester	High School Counselor
Dave Anderson	Elementary School Nurse
Debbie Peterson	Middle School Nurse
Tricia Conklin	High School Nurse
TBD	Parent
John Spacht	Transportation Director
Steve Olson	Buildings & grounds
Sandy Paden	Personal Touch/Cafeteria
Kyle Cashmore	School Resource Officer
Maureen Donahue	Superintendent

## C. Concept of Operations

The Districtwide School Safety Plan is directly linked to the individual Building Level Safety Plans for each building. The protocols reflected in the Districtwide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of each Building Level Safety Plan.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school building will be by the district's Incident Command Team. Upon the activation of this team, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified. Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols when needed.

The nature of the emergency will dictate the degree of interaction with both state and local emergency response agencies. If necessary, the Southwestern District will call upon local, county, and state resources listed in Appendix A to supplement efforts. The Superintendent has assisted in the development of protocols for accessing these services.

## D. Plan Review and Public Comment

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e)(3), this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The Districtwide plan may be adopted by the School Board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

Full copies of the Districtwide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption.

This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the Districtwide School Safety Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before July 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the plan will be available in the district office at 600 Hunt Road, Jamestown, NY 14701, and on the school website at [www.swcsk12.org](http://www.swcsk12.org). While linked to the Districtwide School Safety Plan, Building Level Safety Plans shall remain confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with New York State Education Law Section 2801-a. Building Level Safety Plans and all updates are given to the New York State Police, Town of Ellicott Police Department, and Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department.

## **Section II: Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention**

### **A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies**

Southwestern Central School District understands the importance of training, drills, and exercises in being prepared to deal with an incident. To ensure that school personnel and community responders are aware of their responsibilities under the school Emergency Response Plan (ERP), the following actions will occur:

#### ***Training***

All school staff, students, and others deemed appropriate by the school will receive training during the school year to better prepare them for an incident.

- Roles and responsibilities – training will be delivered at the start of each school year
- Incident Command System (ICS) training – Training will be completed prior to the assignment of any ICS role.
- Annual training:
  - School violence prevention and intervention training
  - Non-violent conflict resolution training programs
  - Anger management, violence prevention, and social skills programs
  - Confidential reporting
  - Review of the ERP with staff including full staff briefings on roles to perform during an actual emergency

#### ***Drills and Exercises***

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

- Section 807 of Education Law mandates that pupils must receive instruction on how to exit the building in the shortest possible time without confusion or panic. The instruction will be in the form of drills or rapid dismissals and include a minimum of twelve drills each school year.
- 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 (e)(3) – each Building Level ERP shall be tested including sheltering and early dismissal (no earlier than fifteen minutes before normal dismissal).
- 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. Where possible, the school will seek out opportunities to conduct full-scale response exercises with law enforcement.
  - Whenever a lockdown drill will be conducted, whether announced or unannounced, the school will notify local law enforcement prior to and at the conclusion of the drill. This will be done to ensure that law enforcement does not receive a false report that the school is in actual lockdown. Any announcements made during a drill will be preceded and ended with the phrase “this is a drill”. Additionally, a sign or notice will also be placed at all public entrances indicating that a drill is in progress and to said for service. This will notify any uninformed parents or visitors and prevent unwarranted panic.

#### ***Implementation of School Security***

- Appropriate school building security measures and procedures are determined on an ongoing basis
- The Building Level emergency response teams also help carry out the Districtwide ERP with regards to school security. The Building Level teams may conduct and review security surveys of their buildings and then detail security needs for their programs to the Districtwide safety team to address.
- Security measures currently include:
  - ID cards for all staff and law enforcement personnel with appropriate staff-level or security personnel access to buildings

- Signs directing visitors to main offices in all buildings
- Sign-in/sign-out areas and visitor tags at all building offices
- Security surveillance and intercoms at entrances with locked doors and buzz-in systems
- All school building doors are kept locked
- Indoor and outdoor security surveillance cameras in key locations at all buildings
- All employees are empowered to call 911 in case of emergency
- Other methods as deemed necessary based on reviews of current practices

### ***Vital Educational Agency Information***

Each Building Level ERP contains vital information such as school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and telephone numbers of key educational officials. Southwestern district administration maintains copies of this information.

### **B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors**

- Southwestern Central School District disseminates informative materials where deemed appropriate, and provides training regarding early warning signs and detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to: the identification of family, community, and environmental factors to teachers, administrators, parents, and other persons in parental relation to students of the district, and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information.
- Training is conducted by administration, local agencies, consultants, or others as deemed appropriate.
- Staff receives training such as Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) to prepare for violent incidents and lessen their impact.
- Employees receive annual training on the ERP.

### **C. Hazard Identification**

As part of each Building Level ERP, each Building Level emergency response team determines sites of potential emergencies that may impact the individual school buildings. Such sites may include but not be limited to all school buildings, playground areas, property adjacent to schools, athletic fields including off-site athletic fields, buses, and off-site field trips.

## Section III: Response

### A. Policies and Procedures

Southwestern Central School District will activate their Incident Command Team and refer to their Building Level Safety Plan and ERP. These guides are reviewed by the safety committee to ensure content and consistency throughout the district. These policies and procedures are for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel, or visitors to the buildings, including zero-tolerance policies for school violence.

The following types of procedures are addressed in the confidential Building Level Safety Plans:

- Contacting the appropriate law enforcement agency as necessary
- Informing the building principal and district superintendent
- Using de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation and informing the building principal of implied or direct threats
- Determining the level of threat with the principal and superintendent
- Monitoring the situation and adjusting the district's response as appropriate to include possible implementation of the safety team
- Isolating the immediate area and evacuating if appropriate
- Initiating lockout and/or lockdown procedures and contacting appropriate law enforcement agencies
- Initiating early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuating when necessary
- Communicating with parents/guardians and general public as needed

*Note: The Southwestern Central School District Code of Conduct also describes policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers and other school personnel, and visitors to the school. The district's code of conduct also supports school safety and security. The code of conduct is pursuant to the district's safe and drug-free schools policy and the no weapons policy.*

### B. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)

Quick and accurate contact with appropriate law enforcement officials is essential in the event of an incident. These relationships are established by participation of local emergency response officials on Building Level safety teams. Emergency response services and individuals, as well as the appropriate means of contact, are documented in the Building Level ERPs.

To ensure the fastest response, individual employees are instructed to dial 911 to contact emergency service agencies in the case of an emergency. They must then inform their building principal immediately afterwards.

The Building Incident Commander (principal) is responsible for notifying Emergency Response agencies and the district office, which is then responsible for ensuring that all other necessary notifications are made.

The superintendent and the Districtwide Emergency Response Team will determine what notifications are appropriate and necessary for all other district programs concerning a specific disaster or act of violence and will instruct all building principals and administrators to take appropriate action.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, some of the communication methods that will be used for internal communication, as well as external communication, will include:

- Telephones (land lines)

- Cell phones
- Fax
- Email
- Internet
- Two-way radio system
- Public address system
- Alarm systems
- Local media and Emergency Alert
- Others as deemed necessary

### ***Plans to Contact Parents and Guardians***

Every effort will be made to directly contact parents/guardians or designated emergency contacts by telephone in the event of violent or other emergency incident or an early dismissal. In some instances, when deemed appropriate, individual phone calls will be made to the parents/guardians or emergency contacts of students by the staff under the direction of the principal/administrator. The district office may take over this task in an evacuation. In some cases, it may be necessary to use other means such as local media. Prior arrangements have been established with the appropriate media. At no time will special education students be returned to unoccupied, unsupervised homes. Southwestern central School District is prepared to shelter any student who does not have a parent or guardian at home at the time of the incident.

## **C. Situational Responses**

### ***Multi-Hazard Response***

Southwestern Central School District recognizes that many different types of emergency situations may arise resulting in the need for emergency-specific responses. However, there are a limited number of responses that may be taken:

- Canceling school prior to start, or delayed opening
- Evacuation, early dismissal
- Sheltering/lockout
- Lockdown
- Sheltering for severe weather

These responses are to be used when addressing emergencies such as bomb threats, hostage-taking, intruders, kidnapping, fire or explosion, medical emergencies, weather and other natural hazards, system failure technological hazards.

For a local emergency, the response will be determined by the superintendent based on the incident, the information available and, if appropriate, input from administrators. Each Building Level emergency response team will be responsible for reviewing and updating these responses and communicating them to staff and students. A response may also be recommended by appropriate authorities such as the State Education Department, the State Office of Emergency Management, or the BOCES District Superintendent under the advisories from the NYS Homeland Security System.

### ***Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats***

Response actions in individual buildings will include:

- Inform the building principal of implied or direct threat
- Level of threat determined by building principal
- Use staff trained in de-escalation techniques
- Contact law enforcement, if necessary

- Monitor the situation, adjust the response as appropriate, and use the Building Level emergency response team if necessary

### ***Responses to Acts of Violence: Actual***

- The following procedures will be followed when responding to actual acts of violence
- Determine the level of threat
- Follow student's Behavior Intervention Plan if appropriate, including temporary placement of the student in de-escalation area
- Use staff trained in de-escalation techniques
- Isolate immediate area and evacuate if necessary
- Inform the building principal who will inform the superintendent
- If necessary, the building principal will initiate the Shelter-in-Place procedure and contact the appropriate law enforcement agency
- Monitor the situation and adjust the response as appropriate
- Initiate early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuation procedures if warranted

### ***Response Protocols***

Response protocols to specific emergencies vary but usually include the following:

- Identification of decision makers
- Plans to safeguard students and staff
- Procedures to provide transportation if needed
- Procedures to notify parents/guardians
- Procedures to notify media
- Debriefing procedures

Protocols for shelter-in-place, hold-in-place, evacuation, lockout, lockdown, bomb threats, fire, violence, medical emergencies, weapons, intruders/confrontational persons, crime scene management, severe weather/natural hazards, hazardous materials, biological threats, infectious diseases/pandemics are detailed in the Summaries of Procedures for Certain Emergency Situations section that follows.



## **SUMMARIES OF PROCEDURES FOR CERTAIN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

### Shelter-in-Place

A shelter-in-place will be announced over the public address (PA) system with instructions on how to proceed.

If there is a situation requiring students and staff to move away from windows and doors (such as a weather emergency), they will be instructed to move to the interior of the room or relocate to an interior hallway or room. Students in temporary classrooms or outside of the main building for any reason will be instructed to move into the main school building.

If the situation is not a threat to the exterior of the building, students that are in between classes will be instructed to return to their classroom.

### *Additional Considerations*

The Building Level safety team will consider the following when reviewing the current plan:

- Turn off utilities and ventilation systems (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) if appropriate
- Prepare to shelter-in-place for extended periods including arrangements for food/water, sleeping, hygiene, medical needs, etc.
- Notify all concerned parties when the shelter-in-place is lifted

### Hold-in-Place

A hold-in-place will be announced over the PA system with instructions on how to proceed.

Students in hallways, bathrooms, or other common areas will return to their classrooms. If the hold-in-place is announced between class periods, students will return to their previous class to await instructions. If the route is blocked, students will go to the nearest classroom and advise the teacher that they are unable to get to their class.

All available staff members will assist in maintaining order and accounting for students, and will remain in position until further instruction is given or remaining in place compromises safety.

### Evacuation

Evacuation will only take place if it is determined that it is safer outside than inside the building and that staff, students, and visitors can safely reach the evacuation location without danger.

Evacuation will be announced by activating the fire alarm and/or using the PA system, and 911 will be called to give notice that the building has been evacuated. All appropriate staff will also be notified that an evacuation has occurred. Changes in evacuation routes will be communicated if the primary route is unusable. Designated staff will assist in the procedure.

Once the building is cleared, all students will be accounted for. Any missing or injured students will immediately be reported to the School Incident Commander. The main office staff will take the visitor log to the evacuation assembly area.

In the event that the situation poses a significant enough risk that evacuation of the building and remaining on campus is determined inadequate, students and staff will be evacuated to an off-site location. The Building Level Safety Plans include a listing of these areas.

No students or staff shall return to school buildings or grounds until advised to do so. In the event that

emergency response services (police, fire, EMS) are called, the Incident Commander may transfer incident command to the appropriate authority who will make the decision to allow students and staff to return to the buildings and grounds.

### Lockout

A lockout will be announced over the PA system.

- All outdoor activities will cease and be immediately moved indoors (gym classes, playgrounds, etc.)
- As soon as all students and staff are inside the building, all exterior doors will remain locked
- Normal activity may continue within the building unless directed otherwise
- It is not necessary to turn off lights or close blinds unless directed
- Report any suspicious activity observed indoors or outdoors to the main office
- A lockout will be lifted when notification is made by administration

### Lockdown

ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) procedures are in place in accordance with district policies.

When possible, a lockdown will be announced over the PA system and 911 will be contacted.

- In the event that an immediate threat to life safety is recognized, any faculty or staff shall raise the alarm and initiate the lockdown
- If safe, students in hallways and other common areas should head to the nearest classroom or office
- All interior and exterior doors will be locked
- Students and staff will move to the designated safe area inside of the room and remain silent
- Teachers will position themselves in a location that gives them an advantage to manage their classroom effectively and will take the following action during a lockdown:
  - Will not allow anyone, under any circumstance, to leave the area
  - Will not answer or communicate through their door or phone
  - Silence all cell phones and limit use
  - Will not respond to fire alarm unless actual signs of fire are observed
  - Document and attend to any injuries to the best of their ability
  - Take attendance and include additions and missing students' last known location
  - Will not respond to PS system
  - Use ALICE training to keep students safe
- Staff and students participated in any outdoor activity upon the initiation of a lockdown should seek a safe location away from the building and call 911 to report their location
- Procedures are in place to redirect buses in the event of a lockdown
- Lockdown will only end when staff and students are physically released from their rooms or secured area by law enforcement

### Bomb Threat

A bomb threat, even if later determined to be a hoax, is a criminal action. No bomb threat should be treated as a hoax when first received. The decision of whether or not to evacuate is dependent upon information received in the threat and how credible that information is.

In the event of a bomb threat, law enforcement agencies will be contacted for assistance. Practiced procedures will be put into action to alert and protect students and staff.

Individual(s) receiving bomb threats should notify the Incident Commander as soon as possible. The appropriate announcements will be made and the Incident Commander will implement the following procedures:

- Determine what procedures should be activated depending on the nature of the threat
- Issue instructions such as shelter-in-place or evacuation depending on the situation
- Notify law enforcement and provide threat details
- Activate communications
- Coordinate with emergency responders at the command post and provide them a site map and keys
- Be available to deal with media and bystanders, and keep the site clear of visitors
- Implement accounting for all persons and reunification when safe to do so
- Determine whether to close school or remain open

#### Actions of Individual Receiving Bomb Threat

- Immediately notify the Incident Commander
- Keep handling of any written threats to a minimum to preserve fingerprints or DNA
- Do not remove a written threat on a wall, mirror or bathroom stall until law enforcement authorizes its removal
- NYSP Bomb Threat Instruction Card should be placed next to phones that are most likely to receive threats

#### Fire

In the event a fire, smoke from a fire, or gas odor has been detected, this procedure should be followed:

- Pull the fire alarm and call 911
- Evacuate students, faculty, staff, and visitors to a safe distance outside of the building
- Follow normal fire drill route or alternate route if normal route is too dangerous
- Teachers will take class rosters with them and take roll after evacuation
- Principal notifies police and superintendent who will report the incident to the Fire Marshall
- After consultation with the superintendent, the principal may move students to an alternative site if weather is inclement or building is damaged
- No one may re-enter the building until the entire building is declared safe by fire or police personnel
- Principal notifies students and staff at the end of the emergency and normal operations resume

#### Active Shooter

In the event of an active shooter, schools will contact law enforcement agencies for their assistance. Practiced procedures will be put into action to alert and protect students and staff.

Precautionary measures are outlined below to keep school personnel and students from undue exposure to danger. Efforts should be made to remain calm, to avoid provoking aggression and to keep students safe.

Functional annexes that may be activated in the event of an active shooter on campus may include the following:

- Lockdown
- Evacuation
- Accounting for All Persons
- Reunification
- Communications
- Medical Emergency

The first individual(s) to hear or witness shots fired or recognize the potential for an active shooter should activate the ERP immediately, taking the necessary response actions to keep everyone safe. Notifications to the main office and to 911 should be made if possible.

Appropriate announcements shall be made, and the Incident Commander shall implement the procedures specified in this annex.

### **Assaults/Fights**

- Ensure the safety of students and staff first.
- Call 911, if necessary.
- Notify CPR/First Aid certified persons in school building of medical emergencies.
- Notify principal. Principal assembles Crisis Team Members
- Seal off area where assault took place.
- Defuse situation, if possible.
- Principal notifies police if weapon was used, victim has physical injury causing substantial pain or impairment of physical condition, or assault involving sexual contact.
- Principal notifies Superintendent and parents of students involved in assault.
- Document all activities. Ask victim(s) and witness(es) for their account of the incident.
- Assess counseling needs of victim(s) or witness(es). Implement post crisis procedures.

### **Missing or Abducted Student**

Missing Student:

- Notify principal/designee immediately. Principal will notify law enforcement and superintendent.
- Search areas of the building & buildings, all restrooms, and campus.
- Check cameras for possible leads of the direction student may have gone.
- Be prepared to give information regarding student's name, clothing/physical description, time and location last seen.

Abducted Student:

- Notify principal/designee immediately. Principal will notify superintendent and law enforcement immediately.
- Check cameras for possible information.
- Be prepared to give information regarding student's name, clothing/physical description, time and location last seen.

For either of above incidents:

- Complete incident report ASAP.
- Refer all media to district spokesperson.

### **Suicide/Suicide Attempt**

Suicide Attempt in School:

- Principal calls superintendent and parent(s) or guardian(s) if suicidal person is student. Principal may schedule a meeting with the parents and school psychologist/counselor to determine course of action.
- Principal and Crisis Team will verify all information and call 911, if person requires medical attention, has a weapon, or needs to be restrained.
- Notify school psychologist/counselor and principal.
- Calm suicidal person.
- Try to isolate suicidal person from other students.

- Ask parents of suicidal person to sign the Notification of Emergency Conference form.
- Stay with person until counselor arrives. Do not leave suicidal person alone.
- Determine method of notifying staff, students, and parents. Hold staff meetings before and after school hours as needed.
- Activate school crisis team to implement post-crisis intervention. Determine level of intervention.

### **Serious Injury or Death**

If Incident Occurred in School:

- Notify principal and call 911. Principal notifies superintendent.
- Notify CPR/First Aid certified person in school building of medical emergencies.
- If possible, isolate the affected student or staff member.
- Activate school crisis team. Designate staff person to accompany injured/ill person to the hospital.
- Principal notifies parent(s) or guardian(s) of affected student
- Direct witness(es) to the school psychologist/counselor. Contact parents if students are sent to psychologist.
- Determine the method of notifying students, staff and parents.
- Refer media to district spokesperson

If Incident Occurred Outside of School:

- Activate the school crisis team. Power Announcer will be used to set up communication.
- Notify staff before normal school hours. Power Announcer will be used to set up communication.
- Determine method of notifying students and parents. Announce availability of counseling services for those who need assistance.
- Refer media to district spokesperson.

Post Crisis Intervention:

- Meet with school counseling staff to determine level of intervention for staff and students
- Designate rooms as private counseling areas
- Escort affected student's siblings and close friends and other "highly stressed" students to counselors
- Assess stress level of staff. Recommend counseling to overly stressed staff.
- Follow-up with students and staff who received counseling.
- Designate staff person(s) to attend funeral.
- Allow for changes in normal routines or test schedules to address injury or death

### **Shooting Outside Campus Building**

(Perpetrator is believed to be outside the building)

Lockdown will be implemented campus wide.

Actions to be considered in plan response:

- If students are outside, get to nearest cover or retreat inside building, whichever is closest.
- If students are in class, get down low, move to side where windows are located, and stay below window sill level (out of sight of perpetrator).
- Lock down classroom and main office.
- Turn off classroom lights.
- Do not move from positions unless instructed by police or school officials.
- Do not attempt to assess the situation until police arrive.
- When safe, administration will advise of situation and subsequent steps to be taken.

## **Weapons**

Staff or student who is aware of a weapon brought to school:

- Notify the principal or teacher immediately.
- Initiate lockdown procedure and call police if situation deems necessary.
- Tell principal or teacher name of suspected person who brought the weapon, where the weapon is located, if the suspect has threatened anyone or any other details that may prevent the suspect from hurting someone or himself/herself.
- If teacher suspects that the weapon is in the classroom, he/she should confidentially notify a neighboring teacher. The teacher should not leave the classroom.
- If suspect threatens you with weapon, do not try to disarm him or her. Back away with arms up. Remain calm.

Principal:

- Call police if a weapon is suspected, as viewed by a reasonable person, to be in school.
- Ask another administrator to join you in questioning the suspected student or staff member.
- Accompany suspect to private office to wait for police.
- Conduct search with police.
- Inform suspect of his or her rights and why you are conducting the search.
- Keep detailed notes of all events and why search was conducted.
- Notify parents or guardians if suspect is a student. Explain why search was conducted and results of the search.
- If suspect threatens you with weapon, do not try to disarm him or her. Back away with arms up. Remain calm.

## **Stranger/Hostage Situation**

Stranger: An Unauthorized Person Who Enters School Property

- Notify principal.
- Ask another staff person to accompany you before approaching the stranger. The staff member should have a two-way radio or cell phone before confronting anyone.
- Politely greet the stranger and identify yourself.
- Ask stranger the purpose of their visit.
- Inform stranger that all visitors must register at the main office.
- If stranger's purpose is not legitimate, ask him/her to leave. Accompany them to the exit.

If intruder refuses to leave:

- Warn stranger of consequences for staying on school property. Inform him/her that you will call police.
- Notify security or police and Principal if stranger still refuses to leave. Give police full description of intruder.
- Walk away from stranger if he/she indicates a potential of violence. Be aware of stranger's actions at this time (where he/she is located in school, whether he/she is carrying a weapon or package, etc.)
- Principal notifies Superintendent and may issue lock-down procedures.

Hostage:

- If hostage taker is unaware of your presence, do not intervene.
- Call 911 immediately. Give dispatcher details of situation; ask for assistance from hostage negotiations team.
- Seal off area near hostage scene.

- Notify principal.
- Principal notifies Superintendent.
- Give control of scene to police and hostage negotiations team.
- Keep detailed notes of events.

If taken hostage:

- Follow instructions of hostage taker.
- Try not to panic. Calm students if they are present.
- Treat the hostage taker as normal as possible.
- Be respectful to the hostage taker.
- Ask permission to speak and do not argue or make suggestions.

### **Confrontational Person**

- Don't argue. Use non-aggressive body language.
- Talk quietly and calmly, do not agitate.
- Remain on a professional level.
- Offer to help the situation.
- Request to continue conversation in an appropriate location away from students.
- Show interest and be a good listener.
- NEVER back offender into a corner, ALWAYS give the offender a way out, and ALLOW yourself an escape route.
- Attempt to defuse the situation.

If the situation doesn't calm down:

- Notify the principal/ designee/ law enforcement

### **Severe Weather**

Tornado watch has been issued in an area near the school:

- Monitor Emergency Alert Stations
- Bring all persons inside building
- Close all windows and blinds
- Review tornado drill procedures and location of safe areas. Tornado safe areas are under desks and in hallways away from windows and large rooms
- Review "drop and tuck" procedures with students.

Tornado warning has been issued in an area near the school or tornado has been spotted near school:

- Shut off gas
- Move students and staff to safe areas
- Remind teachers to take class rosters
- Ensure that students are in tuck position
- Account for all students
- Remain in safe areas until warning expires or until emergency personnel have issued an all clear signal.

Winter weather:

This will be monitored on an individual basis and dealt with accordingly by transportation and administration.

## **Hazardous Materials**

Incident occurred in school:

- Call 911
- Notify principal and consider evacuation.
- Principal notifies superintendent and transportation supervisor.
- Seal off area of leak or spill.
- Take charge of area until fire personnel contain incident.
- Fire officer in charge will recommend shelter or evacuation actions.
- Follow procedures for sheltering or evacuation.
- Notify parents if students are evacuated.
- Resume normal operations after consulting with Fire Officials.

Incident occurred near school property:

- Fire or police will notify superintendent.
- Superintendent will notify principal.
- Fire officer in charge of scene will recommend shelter or evacuation.
- Follow procedures of sheltering or evacuation.
- Notify parents if students are evacuated.
- Resume normal operations after consulting with fire officials.

## **Biological Threat**

The school office shall be notified immediately when there is an Anthrax threat.

If you receive a letter claiming to be infected with Anthrax, or a phone call saying there is an Anthrax presence at your site, your first response has to be containment. The key to controlling the situation is to remain calm and limit the area and persons exposed to the threat.

In the event of a threat, the emergency plan shall be activated. (PA Signal) – “Staff: Building Containment”. Upon notification, the following procedures will be followed:

- Activate lock-down plan.
- Custodian turns off all air handling equipment
- Seal off the building immediately – no one should be allowed to enter or exit the building, classrooms, or offices. All staff and students are to remain in the rooms that they are in.
- Dial 911 to notify the appropriate authorities. Be aware that from the point forth emergency personnel, not school personnel, are in charge of the site. Contact other schools within the district of the threat.
- If applicable, note the type of package, how it was delivered, and anything that will help in the subsequent investigation. Limit your exposure by leaving the item alone. Set it down and move away from it. Keep your hands away from your face so you don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Wash hands!

## **Radiological Incident**

Sheltering notification:

- Bring all persons inside building(s)
- Close all exterior doors
- Turn off any ventilation leading outdoors
- Cover up any food not in containers or put in refrigerator
- If advised, cover mouth and nose with handkerchief, cloth, paper towels or tissues.



Evacuation notification:

- Principal contacts transportation supervisor and informs him/her that evacuation is taking place.
- Principal notifies students, staff and relocation center
- Close all windows.
- Turn off all lights, electrical equipment, gas, water faucets, air conditioning systems, and heating system
- Place evacuation sign in window
- Lock doors

### **Infectious Diseases/Pandemic Flu**

Before an outbreak occurs, enforce effective policies, such as the following:

- Ensure hand-washing policies and procedures are in place (e.g. post signs, communicate to faculty/staff/students);
- Provide education regarding cough and sneeze etiquette;
- Review and update routine cleaning and sanitation policies;
- Review policies and practices related to handling animals in school or on field trips; and
- Ensure students are appropriately vaccinated.

During an outbreak, schools and districts should include response measures such as the following:

- Promote early treatment for those who may be at higher risk;
- Advise the sick to stay home from school and school events;
- Conduct active screening for illness at school;
- Separate sick students and staff at school;
- Increase social distances within the school environment;
- Adapt attendance policies; and
- Consider school dismissals.
- Work together with LDOH/DOH when a case or cases are known so that close contacts and sources can be identified.

You can expect to help LDOH/DOH by:

- Identifying the source of outbreak, scale, and case definition to determine the required response and the level of infectiousness;
- Identifying an unusual cluster of the disease (i.e., an unusually high number of absences); and
- Developing a case definition:
  - Who is sick?
  - When did they get sick?
  - What are the symptoms?
  - Are new people getting sick?

After an outbreak, schools and districts should:

- Determine if a school facility needs remediation before it can reopen; and
- Determine process for re-opening schools or reconvening students by
- Following policy regarding re-opening of school and be sure to follow medical/health department advice;
- Communicating with parents, students, staff, and media; and
- Assessing achievement during dismissals and absences.

## Communication Related to Infectious Disease/Pandemic Flu

### Considerations to Review:

- Use pre-determined spokesperson(s);
- Ask for input from knowledgeable practitioners;
- Be consistent with communication efforts;
- Coordinate communication;
- Consider the target audience; and
- Consider multiple communication methods.

### Before

- ☒ Create templates
- ☒ Identify spokespersons
- ☒ Promote good hygiene practices

### During

- ☒ Continuously inform stakeholders on updates

### After

- ☒ Outcome of the emergency, changes for the future

### Overall considerations:

- Stay abreast of the latest guidance and information from the CDC and state and county health departments.
- Communications should focus on school procedures and decisions. Refrain from providing information and/or commentary on the health-related aspects other than to direct people to information from these health experts.
- Communications can and should emphasize the recommended prevention methods that have been publicized by the CDC and others, all of which are similar to those recommended for the flu.
- All messages should focus on the fact that school personnel are working with health officials to prepare as best as they can for dealing with any confirmed cases of disease. Remind your communities that you have plans in place for emergency situations which you have used during flu outbreaks, and that you are reviewing and adapting these plans as necessary to address this novel virus.
- Until and unless you have a confirmed case of infectious disease/pandemic flu in your school community, every communication should start by stating that you have no known confirmed cases at this time.
- Keep staff – teachers, principals, clerical staff – informed as the situation and/or guidance changes, since they are likely to be on the front lines in communicating with parents and students. Make sure they know what to do and whom to inform if they hear about a suspected or confirmed case.
- Encourage your administrators and all staff to avoid sharing information that comes from sources other than the CDC, state and county health department and/or other health professionals.
- Refrain from posting statements or other information about infectious disease/pandemic flu on the district's Facebook page or other social media channels. Remember that these channels are specifically intended to foster conversation, which will not be helpful in this kind of rapidly changing situation. Use direct methods (e.g., mass notification system, letter sent home, parent portal or district website) to communicate about this event.
- Be ready to explain (to students, staff, the media, parents and the wider community) your reasoning behind how you ultimately decide to handle any confirmed cases in your school community, emphasizing that you are following the guidance of federal/state/local health officials (as applicable).

- Keep Board of Education apprised of how you plan to handle the events so that they are well-informed if any community members or reporters contact them. Provide talking points to board members to help them navigate those conversations.
- Be sure to consult health experts regarding your district's specific circumstances, in the event of a confirmed case, before making decisions.

### ***Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government***

Depending on the nature of the emergency, the Southwestern Central School District may need to obtain assistance from local governmental agencies. During an emergency, the district will call 911 or the local fire department to obtain immediate emergency services. Depending on the emergency, this call will come from the Building Level or district administration. Southwestern has arranged to notify and obtain emergency assistance from Chautauqua County Emergency Services if deemed appropriate. These phone numbers are compiled for all buildings in Appendix A.

### ***Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials***

The district superintendent or designee will contact the appropriate Chautauqua County Emergency Service for access to advice and assistance from local government officials.

During an emergency, the Building Incident Commander will call 911 to obtain emergency services. Southwestern has identified resources from the following agencies: Town of Ellicott, local fire departments and police departments, Chautauqua County Health Department, American Red Cross, New York State Police, and the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office.

### ***Coordination of the Use of School District Resources and Manpower during Emergencies***

The Districtwide Emergency Response Team is responsible for the coordination of resources including manpower and chain-of-command. This team is convened in an emergency and includes:

- the superintendent
- building administrators
- department heads
- safety coordinator

### ***Protective Action Options***

Each Southwestern Building Level Response Plan addresses the following response actions as determined by the nature of the emergency.

- School cancellation
  - Monitor any situation that may warrant a school cancellation
  - Make determination
  - Contact local media
- Early dismissal
  - Monitor situation
  - If conditions warrant, close school
  - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation
  - Contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal
  - Retain appropriate district personnel until all students have been returned home
- Evacuation (before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes)
  - Determine the level of threat
  - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation
  - Clear all evacuation routes and sites prior to evacuation
  - Evacuate all staff and students to pre-arranged evacuation sites

- Account for all student and staff population. Report any missing staff or students to Building Principal
- Make determination regarding early dismissal
- If determination was made to dismiss early, contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal
- Ensure adult supervision or continued school supervision/security
- Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation
- Retain appropriate district personnel until all students have been returned home
- Sheltering sites (internal and external)
  - Determine the level of threat
  - Determine location of sheltering depending on nature of incident
  - Account for all students and staff. Report any missing staff or students to designee
  - Determine other occupants in the building
  - Make appropriate arrangements for human needs
  - Take appropriate safety precautions
  - Establish a public information officer to provide information and current status of the situation to parents and other inquiring parties
  - Retain appropriate district personnel until all students have been returned home

## **Section IV: Recovery**

### **A. District Support for Buildings**

The district realizes that some emergencies may require Districtwide support for an individual school since it may require additional expertise or personnel requirements. When/if the district is faced with threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the Incident Command Team will assist as follows:

- Acting as a sounding board for the building principal/supervisor of implied or direct threats and/or violent acts.
- Assisting in determining the level of threat and appropriate responses.
- Monitoring the situation and adjusting the district's response as appropriate.
- Assisting with parent/legal guardian, faculty/staff, and media communication.
- Assisting with coordinating building and grounds security.
- At the scheduled Administration Council meetings, threats and/or violent acts are shared and discussed.

### **B. Disaster Mental Health Services**

The district realizes that some emergencies may require external support for the district in the form of additional expertise or personnel requirements. When/if the district is faced with threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the Incident Command Team will act as follows:

- Sending a team member to each affected school building as a liaison between the school building and the district office.
- The team may involve the school physician, school nurse coordinator, school psychologist, or district office administrative staff as needed. If necessary, additional Chautauqua County or Town of Ellicott resources may be called upon.
- Continued feedback from those directly impacted is sought. Building and district support is offered during the incident with projected plans to assist if needed during heightened stressful times such as a reoccurrence of a similar event and anniversaries of the original incident.
- Assisting with parent/legal guardian, student, and faculty/staff debriefing and/or post-incident crisis intervention. If needed, assisting in contacting additional outside mental health resources.
- Assisting the schools with the creation of written statements being distributed to faculty/staff, parents/legal guardians; press releases and media requests through the district's public information officer and communications office. The district has a resource of letters, press releases, and media procedures that take the burden off of the individual school building teams.

## **Section V: Post-Incident Actions**

### **A. Investigation**

After an incident has occurred, the Building Level School Emergency Response Team holds a Post-Incident Review Meeting to conduct a detailed investigation. It is the purpose of the Team to focus on facts that may prevent recurrence, not find fault. The Team conducting the investigation:

- Collects facts on how the incident occurred
- Records information
- Identifies contributing causes
- Recommends corrective action
- Encourages appropriate follow-up
- Considers changes in controls, policy, and procedures

### **B. Disciplinary Consequences**

The Southwestern school district has created a detailed Code of Conduct to describe the expected behavior of students, staff, and visitors to school buildings and the disciplinary consequences resulting for violations of the Code. It is the basis for determining the appropriate disciplinary consequences that may be necessary. The Code is communicated to all students/staff and parents, and serves as a major component of our violence prevention program. The Code is evaluated annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes in school policies and procedures. A copy of the Code of Conduct is available to students, parents, staff, and community members in the District Office or on the district's website.

### **C. Evaluation**

The Incident Command Team members are responsible for conducting an initial school building security analysis regarding the potential for a violent incident to occur, and periodically re-evaluating it. These evaluations focus on the identification and assessment of school building security hazards and address necessary changes in building practices. These evaluations review the potential for different types of violent incidents including bomb threats, hostage-taking, intrusions, and kidnapping. Professionals may be utilized from local law enforcement and private consultants, as necessary. The results of these analyses are reviewed for further evaluation and recommendations.

The success of the district's Incident Command Team will be greatly enhanced by the ability to document and accurately report on various elements of the program along with training staff on the plan. This allows us to monitor its effectiveness and update the program as necessary.

### ***Southwestern Central School District Vital Educational Information***

The Building Level Emergency Response Plans contain vital information within the Building Information Report section of the plan such as school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and telephone numbers of key educational officials. School building administrators maintain copies of this information.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A – COMMUNICATIONS

### Emergency Numbers

TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY	911 or 866-SAFE-NYS (866-723-3697)
POLICE – FIRE – MEDICAL EMERGENCIES	911 Chaut. Co. Sheriff 753-4231 NYS Police 665-3113
Life-threatening electrical or gas emergency	911
Power outages – Jamestown Board of Public Utilities	661-1660 After hours 661-1640
Natural gas outages – National Fuel Gas	800-444-3130
Poison control hotline	800-222-1222 or 516-542-2323
Chautauqua County Office of Emergency Services	753-4341
Chautauqua County Office of Mental Health Services	753-4101
Chautauqua County Office of Health Services	753-4590
American Red Cross <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chautauqua County</li><li>• Western &amp; Central NY</li></ul>	664-5115 886-7500
FBI <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resident agency – Jamestown</li><li>• Field office - Buffalo</li></ul>	484-7085 856-7800
New York State Police	665-3113
Homeland Security & Emergency Services – Region V	315-331-4880

## APPENDIX B – EMERGENCY REMOTE INSTRUCTION (ERI) PLAN

Plan Requirement	Considerations & Sub-Topics	Evidence /Plan/ Links	Person(s) Responsible
<b>1. Devices</b>	How many students have devices? How does District know?	All students at Southwestern are issued a 1:1 computer device. Students grades 4-12 take their device back and forth from home and school daily. Students younger than grade 4 have an assigned device that remains at school.	Director of Instructional Services
	How will district get devices to those who don't have them? already?	An efficient system was designed and deployed during the school closure in March 2020 due to COVID-19. Many students in grades 4-12 already had their devices at home because that was the standard procedure. For students in younger grades or whose device was located at the school, the district deployed devices by scheduling pick-up times for families and students. Staff members facilitated family members picking up laptop devices at scheduled times. If a family was unable to pick up a device, the transportation department delivered devices.	Technology Department
	What is district deployment, collection, and servicing plan?	The technology department will work in conjunction with the administrative team at each building to develop a schedule for collecting and servicing devices.	Technology Department
	How will district communicate device plan?	The district will utilize current communication systems in place, including the use of <i>Remind</i> , <i>SchoolMessenger</i> , email, social media, and the school website.	Administrative Team
	How will those w/o a device get synchronous instruction?	All students will have a device. If internet is an issue for the family, the district purchased Wi-Fi devices to loan to families that have limited internet capacities.	Technology Department



<b>2. Connectivity</b>	How many students have internet connectivity? How does district know?	According to the 2023-24 digital resources survey, 99.3% of students have internet access. About 5% of students have internet connectivity issues. The district has installed Wi-Fi hotspot devices in several areas of the school's parking lots. The district also has hotspot devices that can be loaned out to families in need.	Technology Department
	How will ensure that all students have internet access?	As stated above, 95% of families that responded to the Digital Resources survey report sufficient internet access. Students that lack internet access can borrow district hotspot devices or utilize the hotspot areas installed around the campus.	Technology Department
	How will district partner with community to ensure local public spaces have Wi-Fi?	The district will continue to work with local libraries, the local YMCA	Technology Department
<b>3. Synch. vs. Asynchronous</b>	Do all staff have reliable devices, connections, and remote platforms/programs to deliver synchronous instruction (Zoom, Google Classroom, Nearpod, etc.)?	Yes – students have 1:1 laptop devices issued by the school. Teachers will be issued Zoom licenses as needed. All staff and students have Office 365 accounts and access to the student management program (PowerSchool)	Technology Department
	With respect to scheduling, what portion of the school day/week will be spent on synchronous vs. asynchronous instruction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will adhere to the contractual workday.</li> <li>• Students will adhere to a regular school day schedule. Students will not be expected to remain on their computer for the length of an entire school day, but they will connect with their teacher remotely. A remote schedule will be provided at each grade level for the elementary school, and non-virtual materials can be supplied to students if that is needed by the family. In order to reduce required screen time for students, Middle and High School students will operate on a condensed</li> </ul>	Administrative Team

		schedule.	
	How will instruction be personalized for individualized needs including ELL/ML?	TESOL staff will develop a schedule for each ELL student and will communicate the schedule to the families through Remind.	TESOL and Administration
	What training will be given to teachers to ensure they are able to effectively provide remote instruction?	Teachers that require training will be offered courses in asynchronous learning strategies and how to utilize platforms such as Zoom and Teams.	Teaching Staff, Director of Instructional Services
<b>4. If Remote Inappropriate or Unavailable?</b>	How will district determine which students for whom remote instruction is not appropriate?	The district will utilize each building's Student Support Team to identify students who will need an individualized plan. When appropriate, some students will receive in-person instruction if remote instruction is not appropriate.	Administration and Student Support Teams
	How then will synchronous instruction be delivered to those for whom remote instruction by digital technology is not appropriate	If appropriate, students will attend school in-person if needs require in-person instruction. If in-person instruction is not possible, an individualized plan will be developed with the student support team and the family to provide adequate instruction.	Student Support Teams
	How will district provide synchronous instruction for those who remain without adequate internet access despite the district's efforts to provide it?	The district will seek support from community services if appropriate. The Student Support Team will develop a plan to address the needs of the student and identify barriers to learning.	Student Support Teams

<b>5. Special Ed &amp; Related Services</b>	<p>How will special education services be provided remotely?</p>	<p>A Free Appropriate Public Education will be provided for all students, including those with disabilities in accordance with their IEP's. CSE/CPSE meetings will be held via teleconference, telephone and in person when possible if necessary. Parents will be communicated with in their preferred language or mode of communication regarding the provision of services to their child to meet the requirements of the IDEA. There will be continued collaboration between the committees on preschool special education (CPSE) and committees on special education (CSE) and program providers representing the variety of settings where students are served to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on/individualized education programs/(IEPs), plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources. Access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability related needs of students will be delivered in accordance with the students IEP. Special education teachers will work with general education teachers to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities. The special education teachers will conduct office hours with all special education students in addition to providing resource rooms through zoom meetings to those students with that service on their IEP. During office hours the teachers will differentiate and modify work for students. Teachers will collaborate with one another and meet virtually with the Principals to develop instructional approaches.</p>	<p>Committee on Special Education</p>
	<p>Related Services?</p>	<p>Students with related services will be offered tele-therapy to address their IEP goals. They will also provide videos, hard copies of activities, and calls on the phone to complete therapy. Alternatively placed students will receive continuity of instruction through the various programs they are enrolled in. Administrators and teachers from those programs will communicate with the homeschool building principals.</p>	<p>Committee on Special Education</p>

	How has the district coordinated with relevant staff to ensure quality of service is the same as in-person experience	It is unrealistic to expect remote instruction in an emergency situation to be the same experience as in-person learning. The Committee on Special Education will communicate plans with families and students to ensure the student is receiving appropriate services and instruction based on the circumstances.	Administrative Team
<b>6. Hours of Instruction Per Day</b>	How many hours of remote instruction will be provided each remote day? Would the allotment ensure you can reach 900 k-6 and 990 7-12?	The district will adhere to the contractual length of time negotiated with each bargaining unit and be in compliance with required length of school day for the elementary and secondary level.	District Superintendent

## **APPENDIX C – POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DISTRICT EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

### **Policy 3410 Code of Conduct on School Property**

The District has developed and will amend, as appropriate, a written Code of Conduct for the Maintenance of Order on School Property, including school functions, which shall govern the conduct of students, teachers and other school personnel, as well as visitors and/or vendors. The Board of Education shall further provide for the enforcement of such Code of Conduct.

For purposes of this policy, and the implemented Code of Conduct, school property means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of the District's elementary or secondary schools, or in or on a school bus; and a school function shall mean a school- sponsored extracurricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, including those that take place in another state.

The District Code of Conduct has been developed in collaboration with student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel.

The Code of Conduct shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- a. Provisions regarding conduct, dress and language deemed appropriate and acceptable on school property and at school functions, and conduct, dress and language deemed unacceptable and inappropriate on school property; provisions regarding acceptable civil and respectful treatment of teachers, school administrators, other school personnel, students and visitors on school property and at school functions; the appropriate range of disciplinary measures which may be imposed for violation of such Code; and the roles of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, the Board of Education and parents/persons in parental relation to the student;
- b. Provisions prohibiting discrimination, bullying and/or harassment against any student, by employees or students on school property, at a school function, or off school property when the actions create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment or where it is foreseeable that the conduct might reach school property, that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact, threats, intimidation or abuse (verbal or non-verbal), of such a severe nature that:
  1. Has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being; or
  2. Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his/her physical safety.

When the term "bullying" is used, even if not explicitly stated, such term includes cyberbullying, meaning such harassment or bullying that occurs through any form of electronic communication.

Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation, or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender as defined in Education Law Section 11(6), or sex; provided that nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to prohibit a denial of admission into, or exclusion from, a course of instruction based on a person's gender that would be permissible under Education Law Sections 3201-a or 2854(2) (a) and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC Section 1681, et seq.), or to prohibit, as discrimination based on disability, actions that would be permissible under 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

- c. Standards and procedures to assure security and safety of students and school personnel;
- d. Provisions for the removal from the classroom and from school property, including a school function, of students and other persons who violate the Code;
- e. Provisions prescribing the period for which a disruptive student may be removed from the classroom for each incident, provided that no such student shall return to the classroom until the Principal (or his/her designated School District administrator) makes a final determination pursuant to Education Law Section 3214(3-a) or the period of removal expires, whichever is less;
- f. Disciplinary measures to be taken for incidents on school property or at school functions involving the use of tobacco, the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of physical force, vandalism, violation of another student's civil rights, harassment and threats of violence;
- g. Provisions for responding to acts of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment against students by employees or students on school property, at a school function, or off school property when the actions create or would foreseeable create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment or where it is foreseeable that the conduct might reach school property, pursuant to clause (b) of this subparagraph;
- h. Provisions for detention, suspension and removal from the classroom of students, consistent with Education Law Section 3214 and other applicable federal, state and local laws, including provisions for school authorities to establish procedures to ensure the provision of continued educational programming and activities for students removed from the classroom, placed in detention, or suspended from school, which shall include alternative educational programs appropriate to individual student needs;
- i. Procedures by which violations are reported and determined, and the disciplinary measures imposed and carried out;
- j. Provisions ensuring the Code of Conduct and its enforcement are in compliance with state and federal laws relating to students with disabilities;
- k. Provisions setting forth the procedures by which local law enforcement agencies shall be notified of Code violations which constitute a crime;
- l. Provisions setting forth the circumstances under and procedures by which parents/persons in parental relation to the student shall be notified of Code violations;
- m. Provisions setting forth the circumstances under and procedures by which a complaint in criminal court, a juvenile delinquency petition or person in need of supervision ("PINS") petition as defined in Articles 3 and 7 of the Family Court Act will be filed;
- n. Circumstances under and procedures by which referral to appropriate human service agencies shall be made;
- o. A minimum suspension period for students who repeatedly are substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interfere with the teacher's authority over the classroom, provided that the suspending authority may reduce such period on a case-by-case basis to be consistent with any other state and federal law. For purposes of this requirement, as defined in Commissioner's Regulations, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom" shall mean engaging in conduct which results in the removal of the student from the classroom by teacher(s) pursuant to

the provisions of Education Law Section 3214(3-a) and the provisions set forth in the Code of

Conduct on four (4) or more occasions during a semester, or three (3) or more occasions during a trimester, as applicable;

p. A minimum suspension period for acts that would qualify the student to be defined as a violent student pursuant to Education Law Section 3214(2-a)(a). However, the suspending authority may reduce the suspension period on a case-by-case basis consistent with any other state and federal law;

q. A Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of Students which focuses upon positive student behavior and a safe and supportive school climate, which shall be written in plain-language, publicized and explained in an age- appropriate manner to all students on an annual basis; and

r. Guidelines and programs for in-service education programs for all District staff members to ensure effective implementation of school policy on school conduct and discipline, including but not limited to, guidelines on promoting a safe and supportive school climate while discouraging, among other things, discrimination, bullying and/or harassment against students by students and/or school employees; and including safe and supportive school climate concepts in the curriculum and classroom management.

The District's Code of Conduct shall be adopted by the Board of Education only after at least one (1) public hearing that provided for the participation of school personnel, parents/persons in parental relation, students, and any other interested parties.

The Code of Conduct shall be reviewed on an annual basis, and updated as necessary in accordance with law. The District may establish a committee pursuant to Education Law Section 2801(5)(a) to facilitate review of its Code of Conduct and the District's response to Code of Conduct violations. The School Board shall reapprove any updated Code of Conduct or adopt revisions only after at least one (1) public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents/persons in parental relation, students, and any other interested parties. The District shall file a copy of its Code of Conduct and any amendments with the commissioner, in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner, no later than thirty (30) days after their respective adoptions.

The Board of Education shall ensure community awareness of its Code of Conduct by:

a. Posting the complete Code of Conduct on the Internet website, if any, including any annual updates and other amendments to the Code;

b. Providing copies of a summary of the Code of Conduct to all students in an age-appropriate version, written in plain language, at a school assembly to be held at the beginning of each school year;

c. Providing a plain language summary of the Code of Conduct to all parents or persons in parental relation to students before the beginning of each school year and making the summary available thereafter upon request;

d. Providing each existing teacher with a copy of the complete Code of Conduct and a copy of any amendments to the Code as soon as practicable following initial adoption or amendment of the Code. New teachers shall be provided a complete copy of the current Code upon their employment; and

e. Making complete copies available for review by students, parents or persons in parental relation to students, other school staff and other community members.

### Privacy Rights

As part of any investigation, the District has the right to search all school property and equipment including District computers. Rooms, desks, cabinets, lockers, computers, etc. are provided by the District for the use of staff and students, but the users do not have exclusive use of these locations or equipment and should not expect that materials stored therein will be private.

Legal Education Law Sections 11(8), 801-a, 2801 and 3214 Family Court Act Articles 3 and 7  
Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 142 8 NYCRR Section 100.2

Cross References District Code of Conduct



## **Policy 3411 Prohibition of Weapons on School Grounds**

With the exception of law enforcement officers, as permitted by law, and individuals who have the express written permission of the Board of Education or its designee, no person may have in his/her possession any weapon on school grounds, in any District building, on a school bus or District vehicle, or at any school sponsored activity or setting under the control and supervision of the District. This prohibition shall include, but not be limited to: any of the objects or instruments referred to in Section 265.01 of the New York State Penal Law; any air-gun, spring-gun or other instrument or weapon in which the propelling force is a spring, air, piston or CO2 cartridge; and any object that could be considered a reasonable facsimile of a weapon.

Legal Penal Law Sections 265.01-265.06, 265.20

Cross References    3410 - Code of Conduct on School Property  
                             7313 - Suspension of Students  
                             7360 - Weapons in School and the Gun-Free Schools Act

## **Policy 3412 Threats of Violence in School**

The School District is committed to the prevention of violence against any individual or property in the schools on school property, or at school activities whether such acts and/or threats of violence are made by students, staff, or others. Threats of violence against students, school personnel and/or school property will not be tolerated whether or not such threats occur on school grounds or during the school day.

Any person who commits an act or threatens an act of violence, including bomb threats, whether made orally, in writing, or by e-mail, or by any other electronic format, shall be subject to appropriate discipline in accordance with applicable law, District policies and regulations, as well as the Code of Conduct for the Maintenance of Order on School Property and collective bargaining agreements, as may be necessary.

While acknowledging an individual's constitutional rights, including applicable due process rights, the District refuses to condone acts and/or threats of violence which threaten the safety and well-being of staff, students, visitors and/or the school environment. Employees, students, agents and invitees shall refrain from engaging threats or physical actions which create a safety hazard for others.

All staff who are made aware of physical acts and/or threats of violence directed to students or staff are to report such incidents to the Building Principal/designee, who shall report such occurrences to the Superintendent.

Additionally, the Building Principal/designee will also report occurrences of violence, whether involving an actual confrontation or threat of potential violence, to the school psychologist and/or Director of Special Education if applicable. Local law enforcement agencies may be called as necessary upon the determination of the Superintendent/designee.

Students are to report all acts and/or threats of violence, including threats of suicide, of which they are aware by reporting such incidents to a faculty member, or the Building Principal.

The District reserves the right to seek restitution, in accordance with law, from the parent/guardian and/or student for any costs or damages which had been incurred by the District as a result of the threats or acts of violence in the schools.

This policy will be enforced in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, as well as collective bargaining agreements and the Code of Conduct as may be necessary. Additionally, this policy will be disseminated, as appropriate, to students, staff, and parents and will be available to the general public upon request.

Appropriate sanctions for violations of this policy by students will be addressed in the Code of Conduct.

## **Policy 3430 Uniform Violent and Disruptive Incident System**

In compliance with the Uniform Violent and Disruptive Incident System, the District will record each violent or disruptive incident that occurs on school property or at a school function. School property shall mean in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus as defined in Vehicle and Traffic Law Section

142. A school function shall mean a school-sponsored or school-authorized extracurricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, including any event or activity that may take place in another state.

In accordance with the manner prescribed, the District will submit an annual report of violent and disruptive incidents (on the Summary of Violent and Disruptive Incidents form) from the previous school year to the Commissioner of Education. Summary data will be used to determine the rate of violent and disruptive incidents in each school and to identify schools as persistently dangerous, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

The District will utilize the Individual Violent or Disruptive Incident Report form for the reporting of individual incidents by each building and/or program under its jurisdiction and for the tally count of incidents into the Summary Form.

Copies of such incident reports will be retained for the time prescribed by the Commissioner in the applicable records retention schedule. These reports will be available for inspection by the State Education Department upon request.

All personally identifiable information included in a violent or disruptive incident report will be confidential and will not be disclosed to any person for any purpose other than that specified in Section 2802 of the Education Law, except as otherwise authorized by law.

The District will include a summary of the District's annual violent or disruptive incident report in its School District Report Card in the format prescribed by the Commissioner.

### Reporting Guidelines

The District will utilize the New York State Education Department's website to obtain copies of the forms, directions, glossary and additional information at [www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/).

Legal	Education Law Sections 2801(1) and 2802 8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 100.2(gg)
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## **Policy 3510 Emergency School Closings**

In the event it is necessary to close school for the day, activate a delayed starting time or early dismissal (as well as information relating to cancellation of after-school activities/late bus runs), due to inclement weather, impassable roads, or other emergency reasons, announcement thereof shall be made over local radio and television stations, Power Announcer/auto dialing and the Internet/District website.

When school is closed, all related activities, including athletic events and student activities, will be cancelled for that day and evening.

The attendance of personnel shall be governed by their respective contracts.

Legal              Education Law Section 3604(7)

## **Policy 5680 Safety and Security**

The Board of Education of the Southwestern Central School District hereby declares that it is the policy of this School District to provide a safe and secure environment to all those persons, students, staff and visitors, who lawfully enter upon District property or who travel in District vehicles for the purposes of the District.

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to establish and carry out written regulations that will:

1. Identify those staff members who will be responsible for the effective administration of the regulations;
2. Provide staff time and other necessary resources for the effective administration of the regulations;
3. Establish periodic written review of the activities of the staff to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
4. Provide an on-going mechanism for the effective review of safety and security concerns of the staff, students and affected public;
5. Provide for reports to the Board of Education regarding the significant aspects of safety and security of the District.

Labor Law Section 27-a

### Student Safety

All staff who are made aware of physical and/or verbal threats to students must immediately report these threats against students to the next level of supervisory authority for prompt action. The immediate supervisor must then inform the Superintendent/designee, including any action taken, after learning of such threats to students.

The District shall disseminate this policy to all employees in order to ensure staff awareness.

### Hazard Communication Standard

All personnel shall be provided with applicable training to comply with the New York State "Right-to-Know" Law and the Hazard Communication Standard.

The Superintendent/designee shall maintain a current record of the name, address and social security number of every employee who handles or uses toxic substances and which substance(s) were handled or used by the employee.

Rules and regulations will be developed to ensure District implementation of this policy which shall include awareness information, employee training and record keeping.

Legal	Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1910.1200 Labor Law Sections 27-a and 879 12 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Part 820, Article 28
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Cross References 5681 - School Safety Plans

## **Policy 5681 School Safety Plans**

The District considers the safety of its students and staff to be of the utmost importance and is keenly aware of the evolving nature of threats to schools. As such, it will address those threats accordingly through appropriate emergency response planning. The Districtwide School Safety Plan and the Building Level emergency response plan will be designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of schools and the District with local and county resources in the event of these incidents or emergencies.

These plans will be reviewed by the appropriate team on at least an annual basis and updated as needed by September 1. Specifically, the Board will make each Districtwide School Safety Plan available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The Districtwide School Safety Plans may only be adopted by the Board after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students, and any other interested parties. Additionally, the Districtwide School Safety Plan will designate the Superintendent or designee as the chief emergency officer responsible for coordinating communication between school staff and law enforcement and first responders, and for ensuring staff understanding of this plan. Similarly, the Superintendent will be responsible for ensuring the completion and yearly updating of Building Level emergency response plans.

### Districtwide School Safety Plan

Districtwide School Safety Plan means a comprehensive, multi-hazard school safety plan that covers all school buildings of the District, addresses crisis intervention, emergency response and management at the District level, and has the contents as prescribed in Education Law and Commissioner's regulations.

The Districtwide School Safety Plan will be developed by the Districtwide school safety team appointed by the Board. The Districtwide team will include, but not be limited to, representatives of the Board, student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel, and other school personnel.

The plan will further address, among other items as set forth in Education Law and Commissioner's regulations, how the District will respond to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel as well as visitors to the school, including threats by students against themselves (e.g. suicide).

### Building Level Emergency Response Plan

Building Level emergency response plan means a plan that addresses crisis intervention, emergency response and management at the building level and has the contents as prescribed in Education Law and Commissioner's regulations. As part of this plan, the District will define the chain of command in a manner consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS).

The Building Level emergency response plan will be developed by the Building Level emergency response team. The Building Level emergency response team is a building-specific team appointed by the building principal, in accordance with regulations or guidelines prescribed by the Board. The Building Level team will include, but not be limited to,

representatives of teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel, community members, law enforcement officials, fire officials, or other emergency response agencies, and any other representatives the Board deems appropriate.

### Training Requirement

The District will submit certification to the New York State Education Department that all District and school staff have received annual training on the emergency response plan, and that this training

included components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year will receive training within 30 days of hire, or as part of the District's existing new hire training program, whichever is sooner.

#### Filing/Disclosure Requirements

The District will file a copy of its Districtwide School Safety Plan and any amendments with the Commissioner of Education no later than 30 days after its adoption. A copy of each Building Level emergency response plan and any amendments will be filed with the appropriate local law enforcement agency and with the state police within 30 days of its adoption. Building Level emergency response plans will be kept confidential and are not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) or any other provision of law.

Legal	Homeland Security Presidential Directives - HSPD-5, HSPD-8 Homeland Security Act of 2002, 6 USC § 101 Education Law §§ 807, 2801-a Public Officers Law Article 6 8 NYCRR § 155.17
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## **Policy 5683 Fire Drills, Bomb Threats, and Bus Emergency Drills**

### Fire and Emergency Drills

The administration of each school building will instruct and train students on appropriate emergency responses, through fire and emergency drills, in the event of a sudden emergency.

Fire and emergency drills will be held at least 12 times in each school year; eight of these will be evacuation drills and will be completed by December 31. Four of these eight required drills will be through use of the fire escapes on buildings where fire escapes are provided or identified secondary exits, and the other four drills will be lock-down drills. Drills will be conducted at different times of the school day. Students will also be instructed in the procedures to be followed in the event that a fire occurs during the regular school lunch period or assembly, however, this additional instruction may be waived if a drill is held during the regular lunch period or assembly.

### Summer School

At least two additional drills will be held during summer school in buildings where summer school is held, and one of these drills will be held during the first week of summer school.

### After-School Programs, Events, or Performances

The building principal or designee will require those in charge of after-school programs, events, or performances attended by any individuals unfamiliar with that school building, to announce at the beginning of these programs the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

### School Bomb Threats

A bomb threat, even if later determined to be a hoax, is a criminal act. No bomb threat should be treated as a hoax when it is first received. Upon receiving any bomb threat, the school has an obligation and responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of the students and other occupants of the school. This obligation takes precedence over a search for a suspect object. Prudent action is dependent upon known information about the bomb threat-location, if any; time of detonation; etc. Specific procedures as to appropriate responses as a result of a bomb threat can be located in the Building Level emergency response plan, as required by relevant law and regulation.

### Police Notification and Investigation

Appropriate law enforcement agencies must be notified by the building administrator or designee of any bomb threat as soon as possible after receiving the threat. Law enforcement officials will contact, as the situation requires, fire and/or county emergency coordinators according to the county emergency plan.

### Implementation

The Superintendent or designee will develop written procedures to implement the terms of this policy. Additionally, these procedures will be incorporated in the Districtwide School Safety Plan and the Building Level emergency response plan, with provisions to provide written information to all staff and students regarding emergency procedures by October 1 of each school year, an annual drill to test the emergency response procedures under each of its Building Level emergency response plans; and the annual review of the Districtwide and Building Level emergency response plans, along with updates as necessary, by September 1, as mandated by law or regulation.

### Bus Emergency Drills

The administration will conduct a minimum of three emergency drills to be held on each school bus during the school year. The first drill will be conducted during the first seven days of school, the second drill between November 1 and December 31, and the third drill between March 1 and April 30. No drills will be conducted when buses are on routes.

Students who ordinarily walk to school will also be included in the drills. Students attending public and



nonpublic schools who do not participate in regularly scheduled drills will also be provided drills on school buses, or as an alternative, will be provided classroom instruction covering the content of these drills.

Each drill will include practice and instruction in the location, use, and operation of the emergency door, fire extinguishers, first-aid equipment, and windows as a means of escape in the event of fire or accident. Similarly, students will be instructed on all topics mandated by relevant sections of the Education Law and Commissioner's regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Safe boarding and exiting procedures with specific emphasis on when and how to approach, board, disembark, and move away from the bus after disembarking;
- b) Advancing at least ten feet in front of the bus before crossing the highway after disembarking; and
- c) Orderly conduct as bus passengers.

#### Instruction on Use of Seat Belts

When students are transported on school buses equipped with seat safety belts, the District will ensure that all students who are transported on any school bus owned, leased, or contracted for by the District will receive instruction on the use of seat safety belts. This instruction will be provided at least three times each year to both public and nonpublic school students who are so transported and will include, but not be limited to:

- a) Proper fastening and release of seat safety belts;
- b) Acceptable placement of seat safety belts on students;
- c) Times at which the seat safety belts should be fastened and released; and
- d) Acceptable placement of the seat safety belts when not in use.

Legal	Education Law §§ 807, 2801-a and 3623
	Penal Law §§ 240.55, 240.60 and 240.62
	8 NYCRR §§ 155.17, 156.3(f), 156.3(g), and 156.3(h)(2)

## **Policy 5685 School Building Access Control**

Schools cannot always control the crises/safety issues that may impact them. However, through the development and implementation of school safety plans, the District Code of Conduct, and various policies that address school security issues, the District is continually taking steps to improve the safety and culture of the school community.

All school safety plans shall be implemented, reviewed and/or revised as necessary in accordance with applicable law and Commissioner's Regulations. Appropriate school safety training for staff and students, the conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan, as well as procedures for review, will be provided as mandated by law and regulation.

Additionally, school officials will encourage all staff and students to be more aware of their school surroundings by conducting awareness training relating to the school environment that includes awareness of signs of terrorism. Any suspicious activity is to be reported to the building principal/designee who will contact law enforcement authorities. Such suspicious activity may include, but is not limited to, unexplained presence of unauthorized persons in places where they should not be; discreet use of still cameras or video recorders; note-taking or the use of binoculars or maps near school locations; observation of security reaction drills or procedures; mobile surveillance from unauthorized vehicles on or around school grounds; the parking of a suspicious vehicle in the school's parking lot or in proximity to the school building, particularly for an extended period of time; and the discovery of an unattended package or object inside or around the premises of the school.

Visitors shall be directed to the Main Office for specific instructions regarding that building's procedures for visitors to the school.

### **Possession and Use of Cell Phones/Camera Phones**

The Board recognizes that while carrying cell phones can be a safety measure for staff and students alike, problems arise when the inappropriate use of cell phones and/or camera phones interfere with the school's ability to maintain control in the school environment, giving rise to security as well as educational concerns. For example, the use of camera phones poses a danger to school security; risks educational integrity, particularly during testing/examinations; and creates the potential for violations of privacy. The use of camera phones by visitors to the schools can also present a potential security concern.

Inappropriate or unauthorized use of cell phones can undermine (if not render inoperable due to system overload) the communication system in place per the school safety plans, impede evacuation plans if parents or other individuals are summoned to the school by non-designated persons, and potentially restrict the access of community emergency service providers to the site.

Therefore, the use and/or restriction of cell phones/camera phones shall be reviewed by designated personnel, including those individuals who are members of the school safety team(s) and team members involved in the annual review of the District Code of Conduct. As deemed necessary, school safety plans and the District Code of Conduct shall be modified to address the use of and/or restriction of cell phones/camera phones during designated times or events, particularly by students and visitors to the schools.

### **Policy Implementation**

The Board directs that administration implement and review on a periodic basis building access control procedures, and provide IDs for staff, students and visitors as appropriate. Parents and students shall be informed of the school's access procedures; and visitors shall be required to follow the specific visitor procedures prescribed by that particular building.

This policy is intended to highlight our commitment to and planning for heightened security access to

our schools. The policy shall be considered an adjunct to, not a replacement of, our school safety plans and the District Code of Conduct.

## **Policy 7310 School Conduct and Discipline**

The Board of Education acknowledges its responsibility to protect the educational climate of the District and to promote responsible student behavior. Accordingly, the Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility for assuring the implementation of a Code of Conduct for the Maintenance of Order on School Property, including school functions, which shall govern the conduct of students as well as teachers, other school personnel, and visitors.

School property shall mean in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus as defined in Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 142. A school function shall mean a school-sponsored or school-authorized extracurricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, including any event or activity that may take place in another state.

The Board shall further provide for the enforcement of such Code of Conduct, which shall be developed in collaboration with student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other personnel and shall incorporate, at a minimum, those components addressed in law and enumerated in Policy #3410

-- Code of Conduct on School Property. Specific components may vary as appropriate to student age, building levels, and educational needs.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct on School Property, areas addressing student conduct and behavior will further utilize the following strategies in promoting acceptable student behavior:

- a. A bill of rights and responsibilities of students that focuses upon positive student behavior, and is publicized and explained to all students on an annual basis;
- b. A Code of Conduct for student behavior setting forth prohibited student conduct and the range of penalties that may be imposed for violation of such Code, that is publicized and disseminated to all students and parents/guardians on an annual basis pursuant to law;
- c. Strategies and procedures for the maintenance and enforcement of public order on school property that shall govern the conduct of all persons on school premises, in accordance with Section 2801 of the Education Law and accepted principles of due process of law;
- d. Procedures within each building to involve student service personnel, administrators, teachers, parents/guardians and students in the early identification and resolution of discipline problems. For students identified as having disabilities, procedures are included for determining when a student's conduct shall constitute a reason for referral to the Committee on Special Education for review and modification, if appropriate, of the student's individualized education program;
- e. Alternative educational programs appropriate to individual student needs;
- f. Disciplinary measures for violation of the school policies developed in accordance with subparagraphs b) and c) of this paragraph. Such measures shall be appropriate to the seriousness of the offense and, where applicable, to the previous disciplinary record of the student. Any suspension from attendance upon instruction may be imposed only in accordance with Section 3214 of the Education Law; and
- g. Guidelines and programs for in-service education for all District staff to ensure effective implementation of school policy on school conduct and discipline.

Legal                      Education Law Sections 2801 and 3214  
                                 8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 100.2(l)(2)

Cross References      District Code of Conduct  
                                 3410 - Code of Conduct on School Property



## **Policy 7550 Dignity for All Students**

The District seeks to create an environment free of harassment, bullying, and discrimination; to foster civility in its schools; and to prevent conduct that is inconsistent with its educational mission. The District, therefore, prohibits all forms of harassment and bullying of students by employees or other students on school property and at school functions. The District further prohibits discrimination against students, including, but not limited to, discriminatory acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by school employees or other students on school property and at school functions that take place at locations off school property. In addition, other acts of harassment, bullying, or discrimination that can reasonably be expected to materially and substantially disrupt the education process may be subject to discipline or other corrective action.

### Dignity Act Coordinator

In each of its schools, the District will designate at least one employee holding licenses or certifications as required by the Commissioner to serve as the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC). Each DAC will be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), and sex. Training will also be provided for DACs that addresses: the social patterns of harassment, bullying, and discrimination, including, but not limited to, those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex; the identification and mitigation of harassment, bullying, and discrimination; and strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias, and aggression in educational settings. All DAC appointments will be approved by the Board.

The District will widely disseminate the name, designated school, and contact information of each DAC to all school personnel, students, and parents or persons in parental relation by:

- a) Listing it in the Code of Conduct, with updates posted on the District's website; and
- b) Including it in the Code of Conduct's plain-language summary provided to all parents or persons in parental relation to students before the beginning of each school year; and
- c) Providing it to parents or persons in parental relation in at least one District or school mailing or other method of distribution, including, but not limited to, electronic communication or sending information home with each student. If the information changes, parents and persons in parental relation will be notified in at least one subsequent District or school mailing, or other method of distribution, as soon as practicable thereafter; and
- d) Posting it in highly visible areas of school buildings; and
- e) Making it available at the District and school-level administrative offices.

If a DAC vacates his or her position, the District will immediately designate an interim DAC, pending approval from the Board within 30 days. In the event a DAC is unable to perform his or her duties for an extended period of time, the District will immediately designate an interim DAC, pending the return of the previous individual to the position.

### Training and Awareness

Each year, all employees will be provided with training to promote a supportive school environment that is free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination, and to discourage and respond to incidents of harassment, bullying, and discrimination. This training may be provided in conjunction with existing professional development, will be conducted consistent with guidelines approved by the Board, and will:

- a) Raise awareness and sensitivity to potential acts of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;
- b) Address social patterns of harassment, bullying, and discrimination and the effects on students;
- c) Inform employees on the identification and mitigation of harassment, bullying, and

discrimination;

d) Enable employees to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;

e) Make school employees aware of the effects of harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, and discrimination on students;

f) Provide strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias, and aggression;

g) Include safe and supportive school climate concepts in curriculum and classroom management; and

h) Ensure the effective implementation of school policy on conduct and discipline.

Rules against harassment, bullying, and discrimination will be included in the Code of Conduct, publicized District-wide, and disseminated to all staff and parents or persons in parental relation. Any amendments to the Code of Conduct will be disseminated as soon as practicable following their adoption. The District will provide new employees with a complete copy of the current Code of Conduct upon beginning their employment, and distribute an age-appropriate summary to all students at a school assembly at the beginning of each school year.

#### Reports and Investigations of Harassment, Bullying, or Discrimination

The District encourages and expects students who have been subjected to harassment, bullying, or discrimination; parents or persons in parental relation whose children have been subjected to this behavior; other students who observe or are told of this behavior; and all District staff who become aware of this behavior to timely report it to the principal, Superintendent, DAC, or designee.

The principal, Superintendent, DAC, or designee will lead or supervise a timely and thorough investigation of all reports of harassment, bullying, and discrimination. The DAC or other individual conducting the investigation may seek the assistance of the District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer in investigating, responding to, and remediating complaints.

In the event an investigation verifies that harassment, bullying, or discrimination occurred, the District will take prompt action reasonably calculated to end it, to eliminate any hostile environment, to create a more positive school culture and climate, to prevent recurrence of the behavior, and to ensure the safety of the student or students against whom the harassment, bullying, or discrimination was directed.

The Superintendent, principal, DAC, or designee will notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when there is a reasonable belief that an incident of harassment, bullying, or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.

The District will timely collect information related to incidents involving harassment, bullying, and discrimination; provide required internal reports; and complete and submit any required report to the State Education Department in the manner and within the timeframe specified by the Commissioner.

#### Prohibition of Retaliatory Behavior (Whistle-Blower Protection)

Any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been subjected to harassment, bullying, or discrimination by an employee or student on school grounds or at a school function, and who acts reasonably and in good faith in reporting it to school officials, the Commissioner of Education, or law enforcement authorities, or who otherwise initiates, testifies, participates, or assists in any formal or informal proceedings, will have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from making that report, or from initiating, testifying, participating, or assisting in those proceedings. The District also prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against any complainant, victim, witness, or any other individual who participated in the reporting or investigation of an incident of alleged harassment, bullying, or discrimination.

#### Publication of District Policy

At least once during each school year, all school employees, students, and parents or persons in

parental relation will be provided with a written or electronic copy of this policy, or a plain-language summary of it. The policy or summary will include information relating to how students, parents or persons in parental relation, and school employees may report harassment, bullying, or discrimination. Additionally, the District will strive to maintain a current version of this policy on its website at all times.

#### Application

Nothing in this policy or its implementing regulations should be interpreted to preclude or limit any right or cause of action provided under any local, state, or federal ordinance, law, or regulation, including, but not limited to, any remedies or rights available under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Law of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Legal                Education Law §§ 10-18, 801-a, 2801, and 3214  
                         8 NYCRR § 100.2

Cross References    1330 - Appointments and Designations by the Board of Education  
                         3410 - Code of Conduct on School Property  
                         3420 - Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment in the School District  
                         8242 - Civility, Citizenship, and Character Education/Interpersonal Violence  
                         Prevention Education  
                         5670 - Records Management  
                         6471 - Use of Email in the School District  
                         7551 - Sexual Harassment of Students  
                         7553 - Hazing of Students