Southern Cayuga Central School District

District-Wide School Safety Plan

Commissioner's Regulation 155.17

Reviewed by SCCS Safety/Wellness Committee

April 18, 2018

Adopted by BOE August 13, 2018

Introduction

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. School districts are required to develop a District-Wide 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 District-Wide plan is responsive to the needs of all programs within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. School 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.

The Southern Cayuga Central School District continues to support this integral component of the SAVE Legislation through the regular review and updating of its contents. The Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates this ongoing District-Wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

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SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

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

B. Identification of School Teams

As referenced in the previous section, the Southern Cayuga Board of Education has appointed a District-Wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the School Board, faculty, administration, school safety personnel and other school personnel. The members of the team and their positions or affiliations are as follows:

	Member's Name	Position or Affiliation
1	Patrick Jensen	Superintendent of Schools
2	Loretta VanHorn	Business Administrator
3	Luke Carnicelli	Jr. / Sr. High School Principal
4	Jean Amodeo	Emily Howland Elementary Principal
5	Catharine Haight	Assistant Principal
6	Sharon Botsford	School Nurse
7	Mark Johnson	Guidance Counselor
8	Diane Kulas	Teacher
9	Michele Shaw	Teacher
10	Ronald Leonard	Transportation Supervisor
11	Jenice Jones	Cook / Manager
12	Diane MacArthur	Cook / Manager
13	Ann LaFave	Board of Education Member
14	Tbd	Board of Education Member
15	Tbd	School Nurse
16	John Nedza	School Safety Officer
17	Andrew Worden	Safety Coordinator, BOCES

C. Concept of Operations

General protocols reflected in the District-Wide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The District-Wide Safety Plan sets forth the general procedures and protocols to be adhered to at each school and serve as the standard operating procedures.

In developing the District-Wide plan, key internal and external stakeholders were involved to garner the best local operational knowledge and the best emergency management and safety expertise in creating and revising the plan. The Southern Cayuga CSD is an integral part of the community and, as such, it is

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important that community stakeholders are involved and understand the role of the school district and its relationship to the safety of the community at large.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the Building Emergency Response Team (BERT).

Upon activation of the Building Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools 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.

Chief Emergency Officer

Patrick Jensen, Superintendent of Schools, is the Southern Cayuga CSD Chief Emergency Officer. The responsibilities of the Chief Emergency Officer are:

- Coordinating communication between school staff and first responders
- Ensuring understanding of the District-Wide safety plan
- Ensuring completion of Building-Level Emergency Response Plan
- Ensuring the amendment of all plans as needed

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 District-Wide plan may be adopted by the Board of Education 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.

The District-Wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption. In addition, the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be sent to the New York State Police and the Cayuga County Sheriff's Department.

This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the District-Wide Safety Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before September 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the plan will be available on the district website.

SECTION II: RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Initiatives that improve the culture and climate in our schools and improve communication at all levels can substantially enhance our ability to truly prevent any negative event from occurring. Prevention would always be preferred over risk reduction. However, not all such events will be prevented despite our best efforts. Therefore, we must formulate plans to intervene and reduce risk by minimizing the impact of any negative event.

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This section will identify specific prevention and risk reduction strategies that have been implemented within the Southern Cayuga CSD. Many of these components serve as both prevention and risk reduction tools.

Program Initiatives

The Southern Cayuga CSD recognizes the importance of programs and activities that improve the school climate and communication throughout the school community and that encourage the reporting of potentially dangerous, suspicious or violent behavior. Such efforts serve to improve the security, safety and quality of life for all those in the Southern Cayuga CSD school community. The following is a partial list of such current initiatives:

- Assemblies to discuss pertinent issues
- Interventions by teachers, counselors, psychologists, aides, monitors and administrators
- Group setting discussions by psychologist and school counselors
- School rules posted throughout the elementary wing (Emily Howland)
- Elementary Guidance Counselor "Safety Talks"
- Confidential Help with Alcohol and Drugs (C.H.A.D.)
- NYS Troopers Safe Schools Curriculum
- Character Education
- D.A.R.E. Drug Abuse Resistance Education
- SOS (Sources of Strength) High School

The Southern Cayuga CSD encourages its leadership to develop strategies that support a positive safe learning environment for students, such as community involvement in the schools, mentoring programs or adjusting scheduling to minimize potential for conflicts or altercations.

Training, Drills and Exercises

- The Southern Cayuga CSD will provide annual multi-hazard school safety training for all staff and students. The components of this training will be consistent across the district while the means of dissemination will likely be varied due to the specific needs of program participants involved. Staff training will be routinely conducted at the beginning of the school year and will be followed by drills that include the entire school population.

- The Southern Cayuga CSD will conduct drills and exercises to test the components of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The use of tabletop exercises to accomplish this task in coordination with local and county emergency response and preparedness officials may be considered when live drills are impractical or not sufficient to meet training goals. At a minimum, eight evacuation drills (fire drills) and four lockdown drills will be conducted each school year.

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- In addition, an annual early dismissal drill will occur, not more than 15 minutes earlier than normal dismissal time. Transportation and communication procedures will be included in the test, and parents and guardians will be notified in writing at least one week prior to such drill.

- The emergency back-up generator and lighting systems are also tested annually and all systems verified functional without electricity.

Implementation of School Security

- Routine Precautions by all faculty and staff

  All staff are expected to immediately report to their building principal any information they have received or observations they have made regarding anything that could possibly impact the safety and security of anyone within the school community.

  Note: Staff should always err on the side of safety and share such information each and every time. No detail is too small or inconsequential as individual staff may not be aware of all circumstances surrounding a particular student or concern.

- Limited Access

  The Southern Cayuga CSD is tasked with implementing this policy while tailoring it to the specific needs of each building. Generally, this means that exterior doors remain locked until after the end of the school day and then secured in the evening. Entry doors may be open during arrival periods but should be monitored by school personnel. Entry doors are closed at the end of the arrival period.

  Once secured for the instructional day, the district utilizes an audio and video monitoring systems at their primary entrances to remotely screen and approve visitors prior to actually granting them access into the building.

  The district also utilizes a keyless entry/electronic access control system allowing specific access (designated days/times and entrances) to authorized personnel by presenting a programmed proximity identification card to a reading device at those entrances. This system also automatically unlocks and locks specific entrances to accommodate normal arrival, dismissal and after school activity.

- Staff Photo Identification Badges

  All Southern Cayuga CSD employees are issued photo identification (proximity) badges that are to be displayed at all times while on school district property to assist visitors, students and staff in identifying employees as well as possible intruders.

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- Visitor Policy

  The District Visitors to Schools policy will provide the details related to how visitors are handled at each building. Should an unannounced visitor appear at a classroom, office or be observed in the hallways without proper identification (visitor pass or a note from the office), staff may approach and inquire as to a subject's business or contact their school's main office immediately.

- Student Sign-Out Procedures

  Schools are diligent in ensuring that only those persons authorized to sign out students are allowed to do so, utilizing the applicable data maintained within the student record database. Staff may also require a photo ID if the requesting party is unknown to them and may contact a parent or guardian for confirmation when deemed appropriate.

- Fire Alarm

  A fire detection alarm that is linked to a central monitoring station is in service at all Southern Cayuga CSD facilities. These alarms and fire response procedures are tested regularly consistent with New York State Education Department regulations.

- School Safety Officer

  The district employs a School Safety Officer(s) who is/are available on campus during the school day.

<u>Vital Educational Agency Information</u>

The Southern Cayuga CSD maintains general information about each educational agency located within the district's service area, including information on school population, number of staff, transportation needs and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each such educational agency.

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The district recognizes the importance of early recognition and intervention into conflicts and potentially violent or threatening behaviors. As such, the district will ensure that appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training will be incorporated into all phases of staff professional development.

Informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors shall be made available to the school community through various means that may include brochures, district-wide newsletters and the district website.

Students, parents and all staff are encouraged to share information regarding any student conflicts, threats or troubling behaviors with the appropriate school administrator so an investigation can commence in a timely fashion if deemed necessary.

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This communication may extend beyond Southern Cayuga CSD personnel to include members of the District's Safety Team, Law Enforcement, Mental Health Professionals, etc., when deemed appropriate and within existing legal parameters.

C. Hazard Identification

The list of sites of potential emergency includes all school buildings, playground areas, properties adjacent to schools, buses and off-site field trips. The School Safety Team has assessed Southern Cayuga CSD facilities for any unique hazards and has documented them on the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

D. Construction and Capital Project Safety

Each school under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools and the Head of Building Maintenance as well as the involved construction manager (if applicable) will take steps to ensure the safety and security of the students and staff during periods of construction. This requirement may include conducting background checks on workers, maintaining sufficient and appropriate emergency egress routes and notifying building occupants of any changes.

The District-Level Safety Team, or a subcommittee thereof, will be involved in monitoring safety during construction projects as needed. The Committee may include the Head of Building Maintenance, Superintendent of Schools, architect, construction manager and contractors. The Committee will hold additional meetings as needed to review issues and address complaints related to health and safety resulting from the construction project.

SECTION III: RESPONSE

A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communication)

Incident Commanders are authorized to and will initiate contact with the appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident. The district maintains a list of local law enforcement agencies and the designation of the individual who is authorized to contact the law enforcement agencies.

The process for informing educational agencies within a school district of a disaster or an act of violence include the following possible forms of communication: telephone, email, district radio system, NOAA weather radio, district website, intercom or PA system, local media, others as appropriate or necessary.

The system may specify that in the event of an emergency, or impending emergency, the district will notify all principals/designees within the district to take the appropriate action. The district will utilize the School Messenger System to contact parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal. The district might also use local news media or post information on social media or the district website.

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B. Situational Responses

Multi-Hazard Response

In the event of a catastrophic emergency (fire, building collapse, etc.) the evacuation of the building and the preservation of life is the only consideration. It is anticipated that specific procedures outlined in this document, particularly as they relate to notifications, line of authority, etc., may well be violated in cases involving catastrophic emergencies.

There are many variables that could impact the manner in which the Building Emergency Response Team responds to a particular occurrence. These variables could include time of day, weather, age of students, and location of students, anticipated response time of emergency responders, availability of support personnel and availability of transportation. Specific emergency situations are identified and standard response procedures are detailed in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan; however, given the aforementioned variables, it is impractical to try to map out the specific steps to take for every conceivable scenario. It is more practical to focus on just a few critical decisions that need to be made in every emergency pursuant to our primary goal of preventing injury and loss of life.

The Superintendent of Schools is designated as the person in charge – the Incident Commander – during the initial response to any emergency in the district. The Superintendent of Schools will provide leadership, organize activities and disseminate information with the assistance of the Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) if needed. If the Superintendent of Schools is unavailable, or not on site, the Designated Alternate will act in his/her absence with the same authority and responsibility.

In most instances where this level of school response is warranted, the district will be seeking assistance from outside emergency responders in resolving the situation. As such, the immediate objective is generally to contain and manage the incident until the emergency responders arrive on scene.

Procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials, including the county or city officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law, will be activated; this would include contacting 9-1-1, the system for coordinating the delivery of assistance from both the county and local agencies.

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan includes procedures and actions that will be implemented in the event of the occurrence of a hazardous event. Such plans are not available to the public, nor are they to be included in the District-Level Safety Plan.

Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

The district policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence, including suicide, by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The following types of procedure(s) may be used by the district:

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- Use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Inform Director or Principal of implied or direct threat.
- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee.
- Contact appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate, include the possible use of the Emergency Response Team.

Acts of Violence

The district policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The following types of procedure(s) could be used by the district:

- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
- Inform Director or Principal.
- If necessary, initiate lockdown procedure and contact appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Monitor situation; adjust response as appropriate; if necessary, initiate early dismissal, sheltering or evacuation procedures.

Response Protocols

The district selection of appropriate responses to emergencies, including protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions and kidnappings will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The following possible protocols are provided as examples:

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

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

Arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local government agencies include contacting 9-1-1 immediately. Additional support can be obtained by contacting the Cayuga County Sheriff's Department, NY State Police, Poplar Ridge Fire Department, and the Cayuga County Emergency Management Office.

District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

District resources which may be available during an emergency include all of the district's vans, trucks, heavy equipment and other vehicles. The district can also contact the Town of Venice

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Highway Department or the Cayuga County Highway Department to request additional heavy equipment and other resources.

Procedures to Coordinate the Use of School District Resources and Manpower during Emergencies

The Southern Cayuga CSD will use the Incident Command System to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies.

Protective Action Options

Plans for taking the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan: school cancellation, early dismissal, evacuation and sheltering.

SECTION IV: RECOVERY

A. District Support for Buildings

After an incident, the District Crisis Plan will be initiated by the appropriate level emergency response team. Necessary resources will be deployed to support the Emergency Response Team and the Post-Incident Response Team.

B. Disaster Mental Health Services

Mental health services needed will be addressed by the appropriate emergency response team using the District Crisis Plan.

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