

# **DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

## **Ogdensburg City School District**



Revision Date: September 2019

Commissioner's Regulation 155.17

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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 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 schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. Districts stand at risk from a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and manmade disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safety Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in each school district and its schools.

The Ogdensburg City School District ("District") supports the SAVE Legislation, and intends to facilitate the planning process. The District Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

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## SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

### **A. Purpose**

The Ogdensburg District-wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the District Board of Education, the District Superintendent 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 Safety Teams**

The District has created a District-wide School Safety Team including the following persons:

Name	Title
Kevin Kendall	Superintendent
Craig Lalonde	School Board Member
Mike Myers	School Board Member
Erin Mousaw	Parent
Sherry Paradis	Parent
Beth Bresett	Teacher
Jim McCarthy	Director of Facilities
Cindy Tuttle	Secondary Principal
David Price	Secondary Principal
Jackie Kelly	Assistant Superintendent
SueEllen Bouchard	Elementary Principal
Andrew Kennedy	Ogdensburg Police Department
Rob Wescott	Ogdensburg Police Department
Mark Kearns	Ogdensburg Police Department
Corey Maxner	Ogdensburg Police Department
Josh Vine	Ogdensburg Police Department/SRO
Sarah Purdy	Ogdensburg City Manager

### **C. Concept of Operations**

- The District-wide School Safety Plan shall be directly linked to the individual Building-level Emergency Response Plans for each school building. This District-wide School Safety Plan will guide the development and implementation of individual Building-Level Emergency Response plan.
- In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the School Emergency Response Team.

- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will be notified. Emergency response actions including Crisis Response may be supplemented by County and State resources through existing protocols.

#### **D. Plan Review and Public Comment**

- This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the District-wide School Safety Team and reviewed on an annual basis on or before July 1 of each year.
- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 (e)(3), this plan will be made available for public comment 30 days prior to its adoption. The District-wide and Building-level plans 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.
- While linked to the District-wide School Safety Plan, Building-level Emergency Response Plan shall be 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 Education Law Section 2801-a.
- Full copies of the District-wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption. Building-level Emergency Response Plan will be supplied to both local and State Police within 30 days of adoption.

## **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.

This section will identify specific prevention and risk reduction strategies that have been implemented within Ogdensburg City School District. Many of these components serve as both prevention and risk reduction tools.

## ***Program Initiatives***

The Ogdensburg City School District recognizes the importance of programs and activities that improve the school climate and communication throughout the school community and that encourages 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 Ogdensburg City School District community.

The district encourages all school district buildings 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 Ogdensburg City School District will ensure that each district building conducts drills and exercises to test the components of their respective building-level plan. The use of tabletop exercises to accomplish this task in coordination with local emergency response and preparedness officials may be considered when live drills are impractical or not sufficient to meet training goals. Specific drills and training will be conducted for selected response protocols including: Shelter-In-Place; Hold-In-Place, Evacuation, Lockout, and Lockdown. In addition, Early Dismissal drills will not occur 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 generators and lighting are also tested annually and all systems verified functional without electricity.

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

### **Routine Precautions by All Staff**

All staff is expected to immediately report to their respective 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 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**

Each building is tasked with implementing this policy while tailoring it to the specific needs of their program. Once the building is secured for the instructional/business day,

access to the building will be through the main entrance. There will be key school

personnel stationed at each of the main entrances, monitoring who enters and exits the building.

### **Staff Photo Identification Badges**

All District employees are issued photo identification 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.

### **Visitor Policy**

Should an unannounced visitor appear at a classroom, office or be observed in the hallways without proper identification (visitor pass), staff may approach and inquire as to a subject's business or contact their school's main office immediately.

### **Student Sign-Out Procedures**

The Ogdensburg City School District is diligent in ensuring that only those persons authorized to sign-out students are allowed to do so. 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.

### **Video Surveillance**

A digital video surveillance system is in service at all district buildings to assist in monitoring, deterring and recording activity in high use areas, as well as areas of chronic concern or perceived vulnerability.

### **Fire Alarm**

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

### **Random Drug Sniffing Canine Search**

The Ogdensburg City School District may occasionally conduct canine searches throughout the school year.

### **Vital Educational Agency Information**

The District maintains general information located in the District Office, including information on: school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and the

business and home telephone numbers of key officials.

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

The Ogdensburg City School 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, 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 that an investigation can commence in a timely fashion if deemed necessary. This communication may extend beyond District 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 emergencies include: Main building, playground areas, properties adjacent to the building, buses, off-site field trips, and the commercial areas adjacent to school property. Each individual Building Health and Safety Team has assessed their own division for any unique hazards and has documented them on their respective Building Safety Plans.

## **D. Construction and Capital Project Safety**

Each building under the direction of the Superintendent and the Director of Facilities 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 Safety Committee, or a subcommittee thereof, may be involved in monitoring safety during construction projects as needed. The Committee may include the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, The Director of Facilities, Principals, 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 Communications)**

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 methods used for notifications of a disaster or an act of violence include the following possible forms of communication: Ogdensburg Police Department, St. Lawrence County Emergency Services, telephone, e-mail, portable radio system, NOAA weather radio, Ogdensburg City School District website, One Call Now, intercom or PA system, local media, and others as appropriate or necessary.

The plans may specify that in the event of an emergency, or impending emergency The District Office will notify all principals/designees within the complex to take the appropriate action. The District may utilize the resources of the St. Lawrence County Emergency E911 Center 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 may also use local media in some instances or post information on the BOCES website.

## **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 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 Plans; however, given the aforementioned variables, it is impractical to try and 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 District Superintendent is designated as the person in charge – the Incident Commander – during the initial response to any emergency within the Ogdensburg City School District. The District Superintendent will provide leadership, organize activities and disseminate information with the assistance of the Building Emergency Response Team and the District Emergency Response Team, if needed. If the District Superintendent is unavailable or not on site, the Designated Alternate will act in their absence with the same authority and responsibility.

In most instances where this level of school response is warranted, 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. By contacting St. Lawrence County 9-1-1, the system for coordinating the delivery of assistance from both the county and local agencies will be activated.

Each 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***

District policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school will be included in the Building-level Safety Plans. The following types of procedure(s) may be used by the District:

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

### ***Acts of Violence***

District policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other personnel and visitors to St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES will be included in the Building-level Safety Plans. The following types of procedure(s) could be used by The Ogdensburg City School District:

- Determine level of threat with District Superintendent/Designee.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
- Inform Building Principal/ Assistant Superintendent/District Superintendent
- 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 Districts' 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 Safety Plans. 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 Ogdensburg Police Department, the Ogdensburg Fire Department, the Ogdensburg City Council, and St. Lawrence County Emergency Services.

### ***Resources Available for Use in an Emergency***

The Ogdensburg City School District resources, which may be available during an emergency, include all of our facilities at the campus and other vehicles and trucks. We can also contact the City Department of Public Works and State Department of Transportation for access to heavy equipment and other resources.

### ***Procedures to Coordinate the Use of Resources and Manpower during Emergencies***

The District will use the Incident Command System to coordinate the use of 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 Building-level Emergency Response Plans: school cancellation, early dismissal, evacuation, shelter in place, hold in place, lockout, and lockdown.

## **SECTION IV: Recovery**

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

After an incident, a Crisis Team Meeting will be initiated. Necessary resources will be deployed in order to support the Emergency Response Teams and post-incident responders.

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

Mental health services needed will be addressed by the Crisis Team.