

# MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



## District Wide-Safety Plan 2024-2025

UPDATED JUNE 2024  
Adopted by Board of Education: TBD

# MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT-WIDE SAFETY PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Chapter 181 of the Laws of New York 2000 (commonly referred to as Project SAVE, Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act), the following is the Mount Vernon City School District (MVCSD) District-Wide School Safety Plan. In conjunction with individual school building safety plans and the protocols included in the building-level plans, this forms the framework for the MVCSD Safety Plan.

The City of Mount Vernon Board of Education shall annually appoint a District-Wide Safety Team. The Team shall include but is not limited to, representatives of the school board, student (or student representative), teacher, administrator and parent organizations, security and safety personnel, and other school personnel. It shall be responsible for annually reviewing this Safety Plan and recommending any changes to the Board of Education. The Board of Education shall make the Safety Plan available for public comment at least thirty days prior to its annual adoption and provide for at least one public hearing during that period that allows participation of school personnel, parents, and other interested parties. The Plan shall be filed with the New York State Education Department within thirty days of adoption.

In July of each year, the Board of Education shall appoint a Chief Emergency Officer for the District. In September of each year, the Board of Education shall appoint members of the District's Safety Team. The list of current members of the Safety Team is appended to this plan and is considered a part of the plan.

Each September, the Chief Emergency Officer forwards an electronic copy of the updated District-Wide Safety Plan and Building-Level Safety Plans to all staff members. These documents are to be reviewed annually by all staff members as part of the district's emergency preparedness.

In addition, each building principal shall, on an annual basis, appoint a Building-level Safety Team, a School Emergency Response/Threat Assessment Team, and a Post-Incident Response Team. The teams should include, but are not limited to, representatives of teachers, administrators, parent organizations, community members, local law enforcement officials, local emergency response agencies, and any others the School Board deems appropriate.

## **I. GENERAL PROCEDURES**

The MVCSD will endeavor to work at all times in a spirit of cooperation with local public safety officials to protect students and staff. In an emergency, the building-level Emergency Response Team will likely respond first. The principal or a designee shall immediately notify the Superintendent when the Team is

activated. Local law enforcement and other emergency responders will be notified in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Emergency Plans.

### **A. Emergency Management Handbook**

The Building-Level Emergency Plans details the procedures to be followed if a dangerous or potentially dangerous incident occurs at a school or occurs outside the school that could impact safety, security, and business continuity. The procedures will be reviewed annually by the District-wide Safety Committee and local police and distributed to all staff. The Plans contain protocols for the following types of emergencies:

- ✚ Active Shooters/Armed Intruders
- ✚ Bomb Threats
- ✚ Crime Scenes
- ✚ Explosions
- ✚ Facilities Failures
- ✚ Fights in Progress
- ✚ Fires
- ✚ Hazardous Materials
- ✚ Homeland Security Threats
- ✚ Hostage Situations
- ✚ Hostile Persons
- ✚ Medical Emergencies
- ✚ Natural Disasters
- ✚ Student Threats of Violence
- ✚ Suspicious Packages
- ✚ Suspicious Persons
- ✚ Weapons of Mass Destruction

While considered a part of the District-wide School Safety Plan, the protocols in the Building-Level Emergency Plans and content 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. Copies should also be provided within thirty days of adoption to the Mount Vernon Police Department, Westchester County Police Department, New York State Police, and Jurisdictional Fire/EMS Department(s).

### **B. Building Information for Law Enforcement Agencies**

The District's Facilities Department shall provide emergency response and local police personnel with existing school interiors and grounds plans and keys to the facilities. The plans shall be reviewed each year to ensure accuracy and completeness.

### C. Building-Level Safety Plans

Each building shall develop a Building-Level Safety Plan that incorporates building/campus-specific protocols and shall teach students and staff to respond to emergencies and disasters. Staff and students will be familiar with aspects of the Safety Plan so each individual knows what to do and how to proceed in an emergency. Safety Plans shall identify potential local sites of emergency including, but not limited to, buildings, grounds, buses, and work sites and shall provide for:

- ✚ Annual review of procedures for the protection and/or safe evacuation of students, staff, and visitors
- ✚ Designation of an Emergency Response/Threat Assessment Team comprised of school personnel, local first responders, and representatives from other emergency response agencies; other appropriate response teams; and a Post-Incident Response Team including appropriate school personnel.
- ✚ Internal and external emergency communication systems
- ✚ Definition of the chain of command for emergencies consistent with the federal, state and/or local guidelines
- ✚ Coordination of the School Safety Plan with the statewide plan for Disaster Mental Health services to assure that the school has access to federal, state, and local mental health resources
- ✚ Procedures for review and the conduct of drills and other exercises to test elements of the emergency response plan
- ✚ Procedures for securing and restricting access to the crime scene of violent crimes

### D. Daily Measures

In addition to the preceding emergency protocols, all staff members are expected to adhere to the following basic preventative measures. The following measures must be practiced on a daily basis by all district personnel:

- ✚ All authorized staff members are expected to carry their classroom/office keys/swipe cards at all times.
- ✚ All staff members are expected to wear District-issued photo identification badges.

- ✚ Each teacher/staff member who occupies a room or area must scan the room or area upon first entering.
- ✚ The principal or a designee should be notified immediately if anything looks suspicious.
- ✚ After the designated start time of the school day, each school will be appropriately secured.
- ✚ All visitors must report to each building's designated access control entry point(s), such as a Welcome/Security Desk before proceeding further into the building.
- ✚ All contractors assigned to work in any building must first be authorized by the Facilities Department to receive an identification badge, which must be visible at all times when workers are on school property. All deliverables and delivery personnel must first be authorized by the Facilities Dept., prior to delivery.

## **II. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOLS – PLANS OF ACTION**

### **A. Identification of Sites of Potential Emergency**

The Chief Emergency Officer in conjunction with local officials (police, fire, security) has identified areas outside of school property that may affect district operations during an emergency. Factors that were considered were population, presence of hazardous materials, the potential for emergency based on national trends, and proximity to district property.

The identification of sites of a potential emergency outside of school property will be continuously assessed by local officials in collaboration with the District's Chief Emergency Officer to ensure emergency plans are current and appropriate.

### **B. Basic Plans of Action**

Plans for emergency response include but are not limited to the following five basic plans: Cancellation Prior to the Start of School, Early Dismissal, Evacuation, Lockdown/Lockout, and Sheltering. Protocols are found in the Building-Level Emergency Plans.

### **C. Cancellation Prior to the Start of School**

The Superintendent or a designee, in consultation with the administrative staff as appropriate, shall make the decision to close schools/offices. Radio and television notice on local access channels will be provided. Information will also be posted on the District's website. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall activate the emergency notification system that will provide relevant information to all students and staff. Staff will report for service as usual unless specifically notified not to.

#### **D. Early Dismissal**

The Superintendent or a designee, in consultation with administrative staff as appropriate, shall make the decision to close schools/offices early and dismiss students. He/she will make notification to have buses dispatched to the appropriate locations. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall activate the emergency notification system that will provide relevant information to all affected students and staff. No child in grades K-4 shall be dismissed early from school if designated individuals cannot be contacted. A cadre of staff will remain in the building after dismissal until all children have been picked up by authorized person(s).

The Middle School and High School will dismiss all students, and buses will depart at the time designated by the Superintendent. Parents will be notified of these procedures at the beginning of the year so they can make arrangements for where children will go in case of early dismissal.

#### **E. Evacuation**

Evacuation may require exiting the building, away from the building until the danger has passed. In some situations, it may be necessary to evacuate students to an alternate site off campus. Each building level plan shall identify alternate evacuation sites. The general evacuation plan will follow the protocols set at each building for fire drills. The specific evacuation plan will depend on the exact nature of the threat and will be found in the Building-Level Safety Plans.

#### **F. Lockdown/Lock-out**

These procedures shall be used when being secured (locked down) inside the building is safer than being outside. The specifics of the lockdown and lock-out procedures will be found in the Building-Level Emergency Plans and will depend on the exact nature of the incident. At eight (8) times annually, each school shall perform a lockdown or lock-out drill with teachers and students. At the principal's discretion, the drills may utilize the services of local first responders and other emergency management and security professionals.

#### **G. Sheltering**

This procedure shall be used when an emergency requires students, staff, and others to be sheltered safely inside buildings for short or extended periods of time. The specifics of the sheltering procedure will be found in the Building-Level Emergency Plans and will depend on the exact nature of the incident. At least twice annually, each school shall perform a sheltering drill with teachers and students. At the principal's discretion, this drill may utilize the services of first responders and other emergency management and security professionals.

## H. Drills

Education Law Section 807 requires eight (8) evacuation and four (4) lockdown drills to be completed in each school building every school year. De-briefings will occur after every drill or actual event.

\* Persons in charge of after school events and programs will inform all attendees of building emergency procedures, including evacuation routes, prior to the beginning of the event.

### Emergency Drills (Minimum Every School Year):

EDUCATION LAW 807	
•	<b><u>12 Drills Total Required for School Year</u></b>
○	<b>4 Lockdowns and 8 Evacuations</b>
▪	<b>4 of the evacuation drills through secondary means of egress</b>
▪	<b>1 drill during lunch or assembly unless instruction is provided during lunch or assembly</b>
•	<b><u>2 Additional Drills Required during Summer School (1 during first week)</u></b>
<b>September</b>	
<b>October</b>	<b><u>8 Drills by December 31<sup>st</sup></u></b>
<b>November</b>	
<b>December</b>	
<b>January</b>	
<b>February</b>	<b><u>4 Drills for</u></b>
<b>March</b>	<b><u>Remainder of</u></b>
<b>April</b>	<b><u>School Year</u></b>
<b>May</b>	
<b>June</b>	
<b>July</b>	
<b>August</b>	<b><u>2 Additional Drills During Summer School</u></b>

## I. Identification of District Resources

District resources are to be available in each building and stored in a central location. Each building will designate a Command Post. The list, which is not meant to be inclusive, requires the following items:

- ✚ Copy of District-Wide School Safety Plan

- ✚ School Safety Booklets containing Building-Level Emergency Plans
- ✚ List of emergency telephone numbers
- ✚ Building maps, floor plans, and schematics
- ✚ Telephones
- ✚ Radio communications capability and weather radio
- ✚ Battery-operated AM/FM radios
- ✚ Flashlights
- ✚ Fax machine
- ✚ Photocopier
- ✚ Computer
- ✚ Student rosters
- ✚ List of students with special needs and specific evacuation plans
- ✚ Telephone numbers for parents/guardians
- ✚ Information about emergency needs (e.g. students/staff that require medications, vehicular transportation issues, etc.)
- ✚ School and staff census information

The District will, as appropriate, utilize all available manpower during an emergency. The Superintendent or designee will, as appropriate, call in all available maintenance and custodial staff to provide support during an emergency.

#### **J. District-Wide Chain of Command**

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for the coordination of District resources and manpower during emergencies. If it becomes necessary during an emergency, the Superintendent will call upon the staff to provide all needed support. In the event that the Superintendent is not available, the following positions are authorized to make decisions on behalf of the school district:

- ✚ Central Office Administrators
- ✚ Director of Facilities
- ✚ School Principals

Annually, building principals shall designate a Building-Level Emergency Response Team (sometimes referred to as a Safety Team) to provide assistance during emergencies. The building principal shall annually update the list of those staff members and provide their names and personal (home and/or cell) telephone numbers to the Superintendent or his/her designee.



## **K. Notification of Other Community Agencies**

In the event of an area-wide or regional emergency, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall endeavor to notify area schools, businesses, and other organizations to ensure that resources are available to assist students and staff as appropriate.

## **III. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

### **A. Staff Shall Be Trained in Compliance with Project SAVE Legislation**

- ✚ The Student Code of Conduct (including the minimum elements listed under Project SAVE) shall be included in the training.
- ✚ The District-Wide Safety Committee shall help principals assess needs and develop responses and staff development training programs.

### **B. Student Transportation Safety**

In most instances, the District's responsibility for a child begins when a student enters school property. If a child is driven to school by a private party, the responsibility for the child's safety remains with that party until the child exits the car. If a child rides on a school bus provided by the District, the District's responsibility begins when the child boards the bus and ends when he/she steps off the bus at the end of the day.

#### **Therefore:**

- ✚ Trained personnel will staff all buses.
- ✚ A bus driver/school aide orientation program in the first week of school will include anti-violence and emergency response procedures.
- ✚ During orientation, bus drivers will be told whom to contact to report bus issues and/or incidents. All drivers will be provided with appropriate communications devices (two-way radios or cell phones) before leaving the bus compound.
- ✚ The Director of Transportation and bus dispatchers shall be trained to recognize, identify, and handle a potential crisis, using anti-violence procedures and shall review this information with all new transportation staff hired during the school year.

### **C. Intervention Strategies**

Appropriate prevention and intervention strategies as practiced in each school shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✚ School Monitors Elem/MS/HS
- ✚ Anti-Bullying – Building Level Teams Elem/MS/HS

- ✦ Peer Mediation Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Student Assistance Counselors Group & Individual Counseling School Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Psychologists- Group & Individual Counseling Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Character Education Programs Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Drug / Alcohol Programs Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Gradus Honoris / National Junior Honor Society MS/HS
- ✦ Red Ribbon Week Activities Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Celebration of Capabilities Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Co-Curricular Activities MS/HS
- ✦ Extracurricular Activities/ Clubs Elem/MS/HS
- ✦ Awards: Recognition for Academic Achievement, Character & Citizenship Elem/MS/HS

Annually, Memorandums of Understanding between the District and the local police department will be reviewed to ensure that personnel is adequately trained, including being trained to deescalate potentially violent situations. The District's Chief Emergency Officer shall be responsible for reviewing the memorandum and recommending changes.

The Student Code of Conduct provides for procedures regarding bullying, violence, harassment, and other prohibited student conduct. The Code shall be disseminated to all staff and students by the first week of school. This section of the Code contains procedures to be followed by all school personnel regarding student conduct, reporting of violations, and penalties, procedures, and referrals for all inappropriate behaviors as set forth in the Code. Staff members will be trained annually in recognizing and effectively dealing with these behaviors. The Dignity Act Coordinator at each school building shall be responsible for ensuring that such training will occur.

#### **IV. CONTACTING POLICE**

Local first responders are an integral part of the District's ability to manage crisis situations. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall meet at least annually with respective Police/Fire executive officials or their designee to review current policies and procedures, make recommendations for changes, if any, and plan for building-level training for both law enforcement and school staff.

In addition, each principal shall establish a working relationship with local first responders and other security and emergency management professionals to discuss appropriate safety/security policies and procedures, including the reporting of incidents to appropriate authorities.

Jurisdictional public safety personnel will be contacted if, in the opinion of the building principal, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, such outside assistance is necessary. In the event of an ongoing violent incident that threatens the safety and security of staff and students, the principal will contact the police for assistance and notify the Superintendent as soon as practicable. Other than an immediate crisis, actions with regard to contacting law enforcement agencies will depend on the nature of the crisis and are included in the Building-Level Emergency Plans.

## V. CONTACTING PARENTS, GUARDIANS

In the event of violent incidents or crises, or an early dismissal of students, every effort will be made to notify parents. As soon as practical, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall activate the emergency notification system that will provide relevant information. Parental notification procedures for a student involved in disciplinary situations shall be consistent with the Code of Conduct and New York State law and shall be presented clearly and concisely to staff and students each year. When a student is involved in any violent situation, a parent or guardian shall be contacted as soon as practicable.

**It is the responsibility of all parents and guardians to ensure that emergency contact information for students is always up-to-date and complete.**

## VI. BUILDING SECURITY

### A Building Level Emergency Response Team

The Building-Level Emergency Response Team is **appointed by the School Building Principal**. The major focus of this Team is to create, monitor, and update the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. This Team, at a minimum will include the following representation:

- Teacher
- Administrator
- Parent Organization
- School Safety Personnel
- Community Members
- Law Enforcement
- Fire Officials
- Others

The **Building-Level Emergency Response Team** is responsible for selecting the following:

- **Emergency Response Team** (Core group of actual responders not to be confused with the Building- Level Emergency Response Team which is a larger team for the purposes of planning and monitoring) which has the following representation:
  - School Personnel
  - Law Enforcement Officials
  - Fire Officials
  - Emergency Response Agencies
- **Post-Incident Response Team** (Individuals who can assist in the medical and psychological aftermath of a violent incident or emergency) which has the following representation:
  - Appropriate School Personnel
  - Medical Personnel
  - Mental Health Counselors

- Others (Psychologists, Social Workers, etc.)

## **B. Building Safety/Security**

The District shall provide a physical environment, security/emergency equipment/supplies, and procedures/policies that school officials, in consultation with the first responders and other security and emergency management professionals judge appropriate to safeguard the safety of all students, staff, and visitors who lawfully enter school property.

### **The District shall:**

- ✚ Install and maintain appropriate building security systems, alarms, lighting, emergency communications, and locking systems
- ✚ Conduct ongoing visual inspection and systematic maintenance of security systems, alarms, telephone, and emergency communications systems (inside and outside), and locking devices

### **Principals shall:**

- ✚ Establish procedures for controlled building access and campus security
- ✚ Identify staff members who will be responsible for the administration of safety/security regulations and provide them with time and resources that are appropriate, in the District's judgment
- ✚ Periodically review with faculty and staff the security needs of their individual facilities and make recommendations for change
- ✚ Ensure that each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan contain vital information such as school population, number of staff, transportation needs and telephone numbers of key educational officials.

The District shall provide all sites with staff, security devices, and training that, in its judgment, are appropriate to safeguard students, staff, and visitors. This may include but not be limited to: school monitors/aides performing security duties such as managing building access, installing CCTV and intercom / buzz-in systems, and emergency management training, and collaboration with first responders and security professionals.

The District shall establish a process for the ongoing review of safety and security concerns of students, staff, and visitors.

## **VII. ANNUAL SAFETY TRAINING FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF**

### **A. Staff Training and Student Management Issues**

Early detection can eliminate a significant percentage of potential crises. Therefore, personnel involved with students shall receive annual training about warning signs and symptoms of violent behavior. Such training shall be organized annually by the District Chief Emergency Officer:

- ✚ All newly hired crisis intervention staff, that will serve as a member of the building level emergency response team or threat assessment teams, such as school psychologists, social workers, and counselors shall be trained within 30 days of hire
- ✚ Principals will coordinate training
- ✚ The District shall provide retraining as appropriate

## **B. Building-Level Emergency Plans and Other Materials**

Staff shall keep this plan and all other materials relating to safety and security in a secure place at all times. These materials, except for the Building-Level Emergency Plan, may be distributed to the general public or to the press.

## **C. Training**

The District will provide funds and other necessary resources for periodic multi-hazard training for staff. Training may include procedures for the review and conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan and may include the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with security consultants and local public safety personnel. The Chief Emergency Officer shall be responsible for providing resources for this training.

The Building-level Safety Teams are responsible for knowledge and understanding of emergency protocols. They shall meet at least four times a year to review building safety issues, including but not limited to physical security issues, procedural questions, building access, sign-in procedures, and site-related issues.

Other training shall be implemented as follows:

### **A. Staff**

- ✚ Right-to-know training (as required by law)
- ✚ Blood-borne pathogen training (as required by law)
- ✚ Violence prevention/threat assessment training (annually)
- ✚ Additional building-based training based on site-specific needs
- ✚ Knowledge of MVCSD policies related to safety/security
- ✚ Knowledge of the Building-Level Emergency Plan and specific roles
- ✚ Training in the use of security devices and procedures as needed

### **B. Students/Staff**

- ✚ Annual review of Code of Conduct as early in the school year as practical
- ✚ Fire drills as required by law and other emergency and evacuation drills
- ✚ Annual classroom and/or assembly orientations on security and safety issues
- ✚ Non-violent conflict intervention and peer mediation where appropriate

## **VIII. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AMONG STUDENTS, BETWEEN STUDENTS AND STAFF, AND REPORTING POTENTIALLY VIOLENT INCIDENTS**

### **A. Staff Training and Student Management Issues**

Programs to improve communication among students, and between students and staff, should be established in each building. Such programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✚ Youth-run programs
- ✚ Anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence
- ✚ On-premises counseling resources
- ✚ Other programs based on district and building needs

Consulting with students and staff, each principal shall establish an appropriate mechanism for anonymously reporting school violence, threats of violence, and harassment (e.g., Internet, telephone call to Central Office or school, outside agency, suggestion box, etc.). Principals shall conduct a meeting with all students and staff as early as possible in the school year to:

- ✚ Inform them that they are expected at all times to conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Conduct
- ✚ Inform them that they are expected to report all potentially violent incidents to a responsible adult
- ✚ Inform them that staff will be available to discuss any concerns/problems
- ✚ Advise the students of appropriate staff members to contact in the event of a conflict on the bus

### **B. Response to Reports of Potentially Violent Incidents**

When a student or staff member becomes aware of implied or direct threats of violence by other students, teachers, school personnel, and visitors to the school, he or she must report the threat immediately to a teacher, principal, the principal's designee, or the Superintendent of Schools or any other responsible adult. The principal shall investigate the report and, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, determine if it is necessary to convene the Threat Assessment Team in order to make further inquiries about the threat. At the conclusion of a threat assessment investigation, the principal shall determine appropriate management of the threat maker and actions to be taken based upon information discovered during the investigation. Disciplinary action, if any, will be in accordance with

District policy. Reports of potentially violent incidents shall be given to the Superintendent of Schools as soon as practicable.

**C. Response to acts of violence  
(Incident reporting, Investigation, Follow-Up, Evaluation, and Disciplinary Measures)**

Acts of violence requiring immediate response from building personnel shall be responded to in accordance with protocols found in the Building-Level Emergency Plans. Once the situation is stabilized, acts of violence involving students shall be subject to processing under the disciplinary procedures in accordance with District policy.

**Alyssa's Law**

On June 23, 2022, Governor Hochul signed Alyssa's Law, Chapter 227 of the Laws of 2022 (Chapter 227), which became effective immediately. Chapter 227 amends Education Law § 2801-a to require That district-wide school safety teams of public schools consider the usefulness of silent panic alarm systems when reviewing and amending district-wide safety plans. The Mount Vernon City School District has installed these panic systems at each school building.

All incidents of violence, whether or not physical injury has occurred (verbal abuse, threats of violence, etc.), should be reported immediately and documented through the **School Safety and Educational Climate (SSEC) Summary Data Collection Form as part of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR)**. With the realization that employees and students may otherwise be reluctant to come forward, we will maintain confidentiality. Individuals will be assured that there will be no reprisal for reporting their concerns. Incidents will be reported as follows:

The School Building Principal/Administrator or Designee will be responsible for receiving and responding to all incident reports, including anonymous reports. Information on the reporting process for students and staff will be provided as part of the violence prevention training program. Each incident will be reported to and evaluated by the District-Wide School Safety Team or Threat Assessment Team for the purpose of compiling data and evaluating the Violence Prevention Program.

Relationships have been established with the Police Department and other emergency response agencies at the building level. Representatives from these agencies participate on Building-Level School Safety Teams.

### **Reporting:**

Once an incident has been reported, and depending on its severity, the School Building Principal/Administrator or Designee will assume responsibility as the Incident Commander.

- Report it to the Police Department – 911 will always be utilized as the first emergency contact method.
- Secure the area where the disturbance has occurred.
- Ensure the physical safety/medical management of students/staff remaining in the area as soon as possible.
- Ensure that while responding to the incident, the remainder of the building remains appropriately supervised.
- Quickly assess the area of the incident to determine damage as a result of the incident and if it is safe to remain. If necessary, evacuate or shelter as per the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.
- Provide incident debriefing to students/staff as needed. Notify parents.

### **Investigation:**

After the incident has occurred the Emergency Response Team/Threat Assessment Team will 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 will:

- Collect facts on how the incident occurred.
- Record information.
- Identify contributing causes.
- Recommend corrective action.
- Encourage appropriate follow-up.
- Consider changes in controls, policy and procedures.

### **Follow-up:**

The school district recognizes the importance of responding quickly and appropriately to the medical and psychological needs of students/staff following exposure to a violent incident. All individuals affected by a violent act in the school district will be provided with appropriate medical and psychological treatment and follow-up. Provisions for medical confidentiality and protection from discrimination will be included to prevent the victims of violent incidents from suffering further loss.

### **Disciplinary Measures:**

The school district Code of Conduct will be the basis for determining the appropriate disciplinary measures that may be necessary. Code of Conduct:

## **D. Compliance with Safety Plan**

The District-Wide Safety Committee and the Chief Emergency Officer shall be responsible for developing District-wide materials and implementing District-wide protocols in accordance with the Safety Plan.

Principals shall review the District-Wide and Building-level safety plans and verify compliance therewith annually, using this District Plan as an outline. A copy of the building-level plan will be provided to the Central Office and the District-wide Safety Committee.



**Emergency Response Protocols  
Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communication)**

Quick and accurate contact with appropriate law enforcement officials is essential in the event of a violent incident. These relationships have been established by participation of local response officials on Building-Level Emergency Response Teams. These individuals and appropriate means of contact are documented in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. Internal communication is also of prime importance and will be specifically defined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, some of the communication methods will include telephone, fax/e-mail, district radio system, intercom, local media, emergency alert system, cellular phones, and others as deemed necessary.

Appropriate notifications and methods will be determined by the District-Wide School Safety Team. The Superintendent of Schools recognizes his/her responsibility to notify all educational agencies within the school district of a disaster and has established the following notification list:

School	Principal	Phone
Benjamin Turner Academy	Ms. Doris Dapaah	(914) 665- 5387
Cecil A. Parker School	Ms. Jacqueline Green	(914)665- 5045
Denzel Washington School of the Arts	Ms. Andrea Thomas	(914) 358- 2667
Edward Williams School	Dr. Crystal Waterman	(914) 665-5066
Graham School	Dr. Natasha Hunter-McGregor	(914) 358-2810
Grimes School	Mr. Severin Cornelius	(914) 665-5025
Hamilton School	Mr. Mark Molina	(914) 665-5051
Lincoln School	Ms. Rebecca Jones	(914) 665-5035
Mount Vernon High School	Dr. Pauline Pearce	(914) 665-5250
Mount Vernon Honor Academy	Ms. Danielle Marrow	(914) 358-2456
Mount Vernon Leadership Academy	Dr. Colleen Seivright-Crawford	(914) 358-2703
Nelson Mandela/ Dr. Hosea Zollicoffer School	Ms. Barbara Abby	(914) 665-5252
Pennington Elementary School	Dr. Melissa White	(914) 665-5175
Rebecca Turner Academy	Mr. Troy Newby	(914) 358-2311
STEAM Academy	Dr. Christopher Pearce	(914)665- 5155
Sundown Program	Dr. Christopher Pearce	(914) 665- 5155
Traphagen School	Ms. Carol Quinones-Dixon	(914) 665-5060

In general, parent/guardian notification will be conducted by means of the phone tree of emergency contacts established in each school building or other mass notification system (blackboard) However, in some cases it may be necessary to use other means such as local media. Prior arrangements have been established with the appropriate media.

The school district recognizes that many different types of emergency situations may arise resulting in emergency specific responses. A detailed listing of emergency responses is included in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, specifically addressing Criminal Offenses, Fire and Explosion, Medical Emergencies, Natural Hazards, System Failure and Technological Hazards. Each Building-Level Emergency Response Team will be responsible for reviewing and updating these responses and communicating them to students and staff. The following emergency situations are of prime importance:

#### **Bomb Threats:**

All school district administrators have familiarized themselves with the Bomb Threat Standards outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan so that appropriate decisions may be made depending on the exact nature of the situation. Issues such as searches, pre-clearance, weather conditions, evacuation, sheltering, notification, returning to the building and false bomb threat prevention are addressed in the Building Plan. The FBI Bomb Threat Call Checklist will be available at phone reception areas.

#### **Hostage Taking:**

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan for Missing/Abducted/Kidnapped Student procedures will be followed in the event of a hostage situation. In general, the following response actions will be taken:

- The first person aware of the situation will immediately notify the principal's office and call 911.
- The school principal or designee will issue the appropriate alert if necessary and isolate the area.
- The school principal or designee will notify the School Superintendent. No response to the media will be given at this time.
- The school principal or designee will turn over authority to the police upon their arrival and assist as requested.

#### **Intrusions:**

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan hazard specific procedures will be followed in the event of an intrusion. In general, the following response action will be taken:

- The first person becoming aware of an intruder or suspicious person will immediately report this information to the principal's office.
- The principal or designee will approach the intruder to determine the nature of their presence and ask them for identification.
- The principal or designee will accompany the individual(s) to the proper office or if no acceptable purpose can be ascertained, ask the individual(s) to leave. The principal or designee should ensure that the individual(s) has exited the building and alert staff to prevent unrecognized re-entry.
- If the individual(s) refuse to leave, inform them that they are in violation of the law and that the police will be notified. Notify building security if available and Dial 911 or other appropriate emergency notification.
- If the situation escalates, plain language will be utilized to notify all building occupants to lockdown according to pre-defined procedures.

- The School Superintendent's office will be notified so appropriate resources can be made available to the school district.
- The building principal should be prepared to relinquish authority and assist the first emergency responder from the police or emergency services.

**Kidnapping:**

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan procedures will be followed in the event of a kidnapping. In general, the following response action will be taken:

During school hours, when a student has already been documented as present, the first person aware of a kidnapping or missing student will immediately notify the principal's office who will obtain student information and photo I.D. School building staff and security personnel will search the building and also utilize the public announcement system.

- Parent/guardian will be notified. If student is not found, police will be notified.
- The school principal will turn over the investigation to the police upon arrival and assist as requested. No information is to be released to the media.
- Parents will be notified immediately if the student is located.
- During school hours, when a student has not arrived at school, parent or guardian will immediately be contacted. Parents should be asked to contact the school if the student is located.
- If a student is not legally absent, he/she could be lost, a runaway or truant (determine if any friends are also missing).
- The student's means of transportation to school should be reviewed. If student is not located, the police should be notified. Student information and photo I.D. will be obtained.
- The School Superintendent will be notified.
- The school principal will turn over the investigation to the police upon arrival and assist as requested. No information is to be released to the media.
- Parents will be notified immediately if the student is located.
- After school hours, when a student has not arrived at home, the school may be notified by a concerned parent/guardian.
- Gather any information available on the student and their departure from school.
- Advise parent/guardian to contact friends.
- Advise parent/guardian to contact police if student is not located. School principal or designee should be available for police investigation.
- Ask parent/guardian to re-contact school if student is located.
- Responses to Acts of Violence Including Suicide Threats (Implied or Direct Threats)
- Response actions in individual buildings will include:
  - Implementation of the Incident Command System.
  - Use of staff trained in de-escalation techniques.
  - Inform building Principal.
  - Determine level of threat with Superintendent (Activate Threat Assessment Team).
  - Contact law enforcement agency, if necessary.

- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate, utilize Building Emergency Response Team if necessary. Responses to Acts of Violence (Actual) The following procedures will be followed when responding to actual acts of violence:
- Implementation of the Incident Command System.
- Determine the level of threat.
- If necessary, isolate the immediate area through a Hold-In-Place.
- Inform building Principal/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
- Response protocols to specific emergencies will vary but usually will include the following:
- Implementation of Incident Command System
- 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
- School Building Chain-of-Command Table
- Emergency Assistance and Advice from Local Government

Depending on the nature of the emergency, the school district may need to obtain assistance from local government agencies. During an emergency the Incident Commander will contact 911 to obtain emergency services. Other agencies that may be contacted to obtain assistance may include the Red Cross, Fire Department, Local Police Department, Westchester County Office of Emergency (Commissioner), Westchester County Department of Mental Health, Southern Westchester BOCES District Superintendent, Private Industry Groups, Religious Organizations, among others. For specific assistance beyond the scope of the school district’s resources, the Westchester County Office of Emergency Management will coordinate with State and Federal agencies and assist in all post-incident responses. These contacts are clearly delineated in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.

**MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOLS  
DISTRICT-WIDE ADMINISTRATOR TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Name	Title	Email	Tel. No
Kim Smith	Acting Superintendent of Schools	<a href="mailto:KSmith@mtvernoncsd.org">KSmith@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 358-2727
Jamal Doggett	Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Curriculum Instruction & Administration	<a href="mailto:JDoggett@mtvernoncsd.org">JDoggett@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 665-7545
Marie Gaboton-Swift	Acting Assist. Supt. for Pupil Personnel Services	<a href="mailto:MGaboton-swift@mtvernoncsd.org">MGaboton-swift@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 358-2372
Mark Raimondi	Associate Superintendent for Operations and Accountability	<a href="mailto:Mraimondi@mtvernoncsd.org">Mraimondi@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 358-2307

Noel Campbell	Associate Superintendent for Human Resources	<a href="mailto:Ncampbell@mtvernoncsd.org">Ncampbell@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 665-7594
Andrese Williams	Executive Assistant to Supt.	<a href="mailto:AWilliams@mtvernoncsd.org">AWilliams@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 665-5201
Carlos Ramirez	Director of Technology	<a href="mailto:CRamirez@mtvernoncsd.org">CRamirez@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 665-7569
Mireya Cuadra-Hibbert	Main Medical (Nurse)	<a href="mailto:MCuadra-Hibbert@mtvernoncsd.org">MCuadra-Hibbert@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 665-5186
Deputy Chief Sexton	Deputy Chief (MVPD)		(914) 665-3374
Sgt. Joseph Starace	Sergeant (MVPD)		(914) 665-2500
Keith McCall	MVFT President	<a href="mailto:KMccall@mtvernoncsd.org">KMccall@mtvernoncsd.org</a>	(914) 358-2432

## COMMAND POST CHECKLIST

In accordance with the New York State Project SAVE legislation, each principal is responsible for developing a Building-level Safety Plan that incorporates the emergency response protocols, designates an emergency response/threat assessment team, establishes a chain of command and a Command Post in his or her building, and provides for appropriate training for students and staff. This information needs to be reviewed and updated annually with the District Chief Emergency Officer in the Central Office.

The Command Post can be but does not need to be the principal's office. This location should be supplied with the following items to enable effective communication and rescue coordination (maps, floor plans, etc.). In addition, each command post must be able to identify who is in the building (personnel and student rosters) and who may have special needs requiring special assistance. The following items need to be available at all times at the designated Command Post:

- ✚ List of emergency telephone numbers (police, fire, ambulance, superintendent, transportation, etc.)
- ✚ Maps, floor plans, schematics
- ✚ Building-level emergency plans, detailing evacuation sites
- ✚ Telephones
- ✚ Battery-operated AM/FM radio, weather radio, flashlights or lamps
- ✚ Fax machine, Photocopier and Computer
- ✚ Student rosters, List of students with special needs
- ✚ Telephone numbers for parents/guardians
- ✚ Information about emergency needs

## EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

When an emergency requires notification of staff, the Superintendent or his/her designee will provide constantly updated information to local media sources. Additional information may also be found on the District's website, [www.mtvernoncsd.org](http://www.mtvernoncsd.org).

During an emergency, all contact with the media will be handled either by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The media and public will be informed and updated as soon as practicable on all developments in statements released by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Pupils, staff, and parents should refer all questions and requests for information to the Superintendent in order to assure the release of factual and current information. The Superintendent may refer such requests to his/her designee for a response.

By definition, emergency events are unforeseen and unpredictable. The safety of students and staff is the primary focus of all activities surrounding an emergency event. Every effort will be made to contact parents and the general public once the situation has stabilized.

*Please contact the District's Chief Emergency Officer at 914-665-5393, if you require additional information.*

**PROTOCOLS FOR A STATE DISASTER EMERGENCY INVOLVING A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

In September 2020, Governor Cuomo signed legislation that requires all New York State public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease. The new legislation will constitute New York State Labor Law [Section 27-c](#), and serve as a response to the effects of the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Spring of 2020. In addition to 27-C, the following section was added to [2801-a of the Education Law](#) that required additions to the District Plan.

*Education Law - 2801-a (m) - protocols for responding to a declared state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease that is substantially consistent with the provisions of section twenty-seven-c of the labor law.*

**PROTOCOLS**

1. In the event of a state-ordered reduction of the district’s in-person workforce, the following is a list of **essential** employees.

Position	Title	Justification
Information Technology	Director Technicians	This group is needed to maintain the internet capability including remote learning and working from home.
Custodial and Maintenance	Director Asst. Director Senior Custodians Maintenance Mechanics Grounds	This group is needed to maintain the cleanliness and continued functioning of the building & grounds.

Administration	Superintendent & Asst. Superintendents	Required to ensure continuity of the response efforts.
Building Administration & Clerical Support	Building Administrators & Clerical Support	Required to ensure continuity of the response efforts.
Faculty and Staff	Teachers/Related Service Provider and Similar Instructional Staff	To provide instruction, related services, etc., to students as needed to the extent they are attending school in person.
Security	Security Coordinator & Security Assistants	To ensure the safety/security of the campuses.
Transportation	Director of Transportation, Support Staff & Transportation Contractor	To transport food to students who receive home meals and/or to transport students as needed to the extent they are attending school in person.
Food Service	Food Service Director & Food Service Workers	To prepare and distribute meals to students.
Health Services	Director of Health Services and staff as deemed necessary	To assist with testing requirements, reporting, and contact tracing.
Business Operations	Accounting, Payroll, Accounts Payroll, Purchasing	Where necessary to ensure the continued operation of the District.

2. To enable all non-essential employees in a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease to telecommute, the District will provide the appropriate technology resources needed.

3. To reduce overcrowding on public transportation:
- Class schedules may be staggered to a daily cohort system consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreements.
  - In-person days may be staggered by cohort groups.
  - Staff and students may walk or drive a personal vehicle to campus.
  - Staff may be required to arrive on campus prior to students in a staggered work shift consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreements or staggered assigned day of work.
  - Employees may be permitted to work remotely.
  - Students may be permitted to receive instruction remotely.
  - Visitors may not be permitted on campus during school hours.

4. A quantity of personal protective equipment PPE, sufficient to provide to all essential employees, will be procured, stored, and managed as follows:

- The Facilities Department will maintain an inventory of PPE in accordance with NYS Education Department guidelines, and continually restock same as needed.
- Storage of personal protective equipment will be on campus and comply with the manufacturer's storage recommendations for each item.
- PPE equipment will be readily available if needed.

5. In the event an employee, student or contractor is exposed to a known case of a communicable disease that is subject to a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease, exhibits symptoms of such disease, or tests positive for such disease, the District will respond as follows:

- Staff have been provided training on how to identify signs of illness in students and staff and the procedure to send symptomatic students to the school nurse or other designated personnel in each building.

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- The person will be moved to a predetermined isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms.
- The person will be assessed by a registered nurse at the school.
- Transportation arrangements will be made to transport the sick person home or to a healthcare facility.
- Areas used by a sick person will be closed off and not used before cleaning and disinfection. All remaining staff members will wash their hands and be sent to a clean area within the school for the remainder of the day if possible or at least until the room is aired out and disinfected.
- When possible, custodial staff will wait 24 hours (or as long as possible) before cleaning and disinfecting the area in accordance with procedures contained in this plan. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible.
- Persons who had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 will be advised to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms and to follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms, they will be instructed to follow appropriate CDC guidance for home isolation.
- Sick staff members and children will be advised not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- In the event that the school is notified that an employee or student has been exposed to COVID-19 and is quarantined, or if a family member has been diagnosed with or presumed to have COVID-19 and/or is being isolated, the following procedure will be followed:
  - i. Personnel and students with known exposure to someone diagnosed or presumed to have a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease will be instructed to self-quarantine at home for 14 days
  - ii. If a student is excluded from school due to a state disaster emergency involving communicable disease symptoms or has had a positive test, his or her siblings or other students living in the same household will be questioned, and if they exhibit symptoms, they will also be excluded from school. If they do not exhibit symptoms, they may still be excluded from school and asked to self-quarantine.
  - iii. The custodial staff will be informed so that all desks, lockers, and workspaces of the person are thoroughly disinfected. If the school is not open when a notification occurs, the custodial staff will wait 24 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting and instead will block off the area so that others do not have contact. However, if that is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.
  - iv. If a student/employee presents with asthma symptoms, they will be assessed by a registered nurse.
  - v. Assessment will include checking of lungs for wheezing, temperature check, O2 saturation, and will include assessment for any state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease, or communicable disease symptoms.

- vi. Isolate student/employee if experiencing any state disaster emergency involving communicable disease symptoms.
- vii. If a student/employee is experiencing coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, an inhaler will be administered with a spacer valved holding chamber to maximize the effectiveness of the medication if prescribed by their medical practitioner.
- viii. Nebulizer treatment will be used only if: Inhaler medication with a spacer valve is not effective and the student/employee is experiencing continued shortness of breath. O2 sat is 90 or below or when the nurse assesses that nebulizer treatment is imperative.
- ix. When nebulizer treatment is needed it must be done in a vented isolation room.
- x. The nurse giving the treatment must have a proper PPE: fitted N95 mask.
- xi. Once the treatments are completed. The room must be closed for 2 hours and disinfected, after the 2 hours, before the room can be reused.

Applicable notification letters regarding exposure or illnesses will be utilized to communicate with employees/parents/guardians in consultation with the local health department.

6. All essential employees in a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease will have their hours and work locations documented, including off-site visits, by:
  - All entrances will be locked and monitored by security assistants.
  - All employees in a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease are required to complete a daily health assessment prior to entering all district locations.
  - Payroll/timecards along with the attendance management system (Aesop) will further document an employee's presence on campus.
  - Non-essential visitors will not be allowed on site.

7. If emergency housing is needed the District will lodge an essential employee on district property or at a local hotel.

If there is a declared state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease that involves the Mount Vernon City School District, all staff, essential and non-essential, will be contacted, and they will be guided by the aforementioned protocols.

8. OTHER: Any other requirements determined by the Department of Health such as contact tracing or testing, physical distancing, hygiene, disinfectant, or mask-wearing

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## APPENDIX 1 – BUILDING-LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

Due to the sensitive safety and security information contained in each Building-level Emergency Response Plan, these plans are confidential and not available for public dissemination. Copies of plans are maintained at each school building and the District office.

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## APPENDIX 2 – Remote Instruction Plan

### **District Elementary Schools**

- All classrooms will use the Schoology and Office 365 platform providing consistency across grade levels and classrooms.
- Students and teachers will utilize a consistent schedule that incorporates multiple live sessions each day, along with structured opportunities for independent work and instruction using prerecorded, teacher created videos.
- Classes will follow the same special area schedule that they do in school - with special area teachers going live with each class twice a week.
- AIS and Related Service program will have dedicated time in the daily schedule that does not conflict with classroom teacher and/or special area time.

### **District Middle School-**

- Schedule would follow from our in-person schedule.
- The expectation would be that teachers go live with students daily at their assigned times and take attendance. Teachers can plan to utilize that period of instruction by:
  - Hold a morning meeting (for homeroom teachers' period 1 of the day)
  - Teach a full class lesson live, if instructionally appropriate (but minimum 2x per week)
  - Teach small groups (planned in advance with student schedules, or can tell students at the beginning of the session who will be staying on)
  - Hold office hours for extra help.
  - It is expected that all students are therefore present, available, and working in that subject area for the scheduled period of time.
  - We will share expectations of student conduct for online learning with families.

### **District High School-**

- Should the district need to switch to a fully Remote Learning model, the following will be expected:
  - Using Schoology and Office 365, students will follow their P1 through P9 daily schedule while on Remote Learning with their teacher.
  - Expectations for student attendance and behavior during Remote Learning will be communicated to students.
  - Teachers and students will use Schoology and Office 365 from the beginning of the year.

### **Access to Technology**

Access to technology is critical for the effective movement of our plan. MVCSD is dedicated to constant development and execution of district technologies to ensure sufficient links for staff and students.

- Pre-K-1 Students are assigned touch screen mobile devices (iPad).
- Students in grades 2-12 already have 1-1 laptop devices for at home use.

- Pre-K-1 Students login using a quick access code or QR Code
- 2-12 student will login with their standard username and password and access all school software using single sign on
- Teachers have access to a computer device in their classroom. Teachers also have a school issued mobile device.
- Students will use their own internet when at home. If no internet access is
- available, the district can provide a hotspot. Students in need of a hotspot/Wi-Fi will contact the Technology Department (914) 358-2360 and awaiting administrative agreement will be supplied with the hotspot/ in a timely manner.

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