

**Fort Edward Union Free School
District
District-Wide
School Safety Plan**

2025 - 2026

Revised: November 2025

Address: 220 Broadway, Fort Edward, NY 12828

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**Fort Edward Union Free School District
District-Wide School Safety Plan**

I. 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 schools with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The District-Wide School Safety Plan is a comprehensive, multi-hazard school safety plan that covers all school buildings of the school district that addresses crisis intervention, emergency response and management at the district level.

The District-Wide Plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the District and is consistent with the more detailed and confidential Building Level Emergency Response Plan. Schools are at risk of a wide variety of acts of violence and 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 District and its schools.

The Fort Edward Union Free School District supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of Schools of The Fort Edward Union Free School District encourages and advocates on-going cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

A. Designation of the Chief Emergency Officer

§ 155.17(c)(1)(xix) the designation of the superintendent, or superintendent's designee, as the district chief emergency officer whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) coordination of communication between school staff, law enforcement, and other first responders;
- b) lead the efforts of the district-wide school safety team in the completion and yearly update of the district-wide school safety plan and the coordination of the district-wide plan with the building-level emergency response plans;
- c) ensure staff understanding of the district-wide school safety plan;
- d) ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans for each school building;
- e) assist in the selection of security related technology and development of procedures for the use of such technology;
- f) coordinate appropriate safety, security, and emergency training for district and school staff, including required training in the districtwide school safety plan and building-level emergency response plan(s);

- g) ensure the conduct of required evacuation and lock-down drills in a trauma-informed, developmentally, and age-appropriate manner that does not include props, actors, simulations, or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting or other act of violence or emergency in all district buildings as required by section 807 of the Education Law; and
- h) ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans by the dates designated by the commissioner

The Fort Edward Union Free School District Chief Emergency Officer:

Name	Benjamin Halsey
Title	Superintendent
Telephone Number	518-747-4529

B. Appointment of the District Wide School Safety Team

Upon adoption of the District Wide School Safety Plan, the following appointments are made to the District Wide School Safety Team:

Board of Education	Jodie Boucher
District Administrator	Benjamin Halsey
Representative of Teacher Organization	John Boucher
Representative of Administrator Organizations	Jessica Smakto, Elementary Principal
Representative of Parent Organization	John Boucher
School Safety Personnel	Jason Gutowski
Bus Driver and Monitor	John Brown Rick Doty
Student (optional)*	
Other	William Brown, Fire Chief Tony LeClair, Washington County Sherrif
Technology	Sandy Wagner
Facilities	Steve Neron
Nurse	Jennifer Ballard
Other	Needham Risk Management, Safety Consultant

The District Wide School Safety Team will meet regularly throughout the year to:

- Assess and review the District-wide Safety Plan annually and make updates, as needed throughout the school year.
- Make any necessary recommendations regarding emergency operations, planning, procedures, and/or protocols.
- Conduct training sessions as necessary.

- Support the Building-level Emergency Response Planning Teams at each school as necessary.
- Meet with local emergency responders to develop procedures for emergency situations that exceed the expertise and/or resources of the district.
- Prepare the updated District-wide School Safety Plan for the required public comment period, public meeting and adoption by the Board of Education by the required deadline of September 1 each school year.
- Additional tasks as requested by the Superintendent.

*Per the regulations, the student representative will not be present for discussions about confidential building-level response plans or portions of the district-wide emergency response strategies that are confidential, and no portion of a confidential building-level emergency response plan will be shared with the student representative(s).

C. District Information

The Fort Edward Union Free School District serves a student population of approximately 400. Within the district there are 100 employees, who serve a variety of functions in the development and education of the entire district's student body.

The Fort Edward UFSD operates one K – 12 building:

220 Broadway

Fort Edward, NY 12828

518-747-4529

<https://www.fortedward.org/>

Fort Edward UFSD Bus Garage

220 Broadway,

Fort Edward, NY, 12828

(518) 494-3727

Transportation Office

D. District Wide School Safety Plan Review and Public Comment

To comply with New York State Education Law §2801-a and Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(c)(3)(i), The District must adopt and submit its District-Wide School Safety Plan to the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Annual Review and Update: The District-Wide School Safety Planning Team conducts meetings to review the Plan and throughout the school year, stakeholder feedback is gathered from various sources.

Public Comment Period: To ensure that the plan is in place and board approved by the September 1 deadline, the updated draft plan will be posted on the District's website. A 30-day public comment period is initiated, during which stakeholders can provide feedback.

Public Hearing and Board Adoption: A public hearing allows participation from school personnel, parents, students, and other interested parties. Following the hearing, the Board of Education adopts the final plan by September 1st, ensuring compliance with the requirement for at least one public hearing prior to adoption.

Submission to NYSED: Within 30 days of adoption, and no later than October 1st, the approved plan will be posted on the district website, and the superintendent will submit the plan URL and an attestation regarding staff training to the NYSED via the SED Monitoring application, providing contact information for the Chief Emergency Officer and details of the public comment period and adoption date.

Confidentiality of Building-Level Emergency Response Plans: In accordance with Education Law §2801-a, all school building-level emergency response plans remain confidential and are not subject to public disclosure. These plans are updated annually by September 1st and submitted to NYSED, local law enforcement, and the State Police by October 1st.

E. District Policy Manual

The policy statements formulated by the Board of Education of the Fort Edward Union Free School District are available on the district website (<https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/fortedward/board.nsf/public?open&id=policies%23>).

The policies related to school safety include but are not limited to:
Appendix A: Policy 8210 Safety Conditions and Prevention Instruction
Appendix B: Policy 8271 Internet Safety/Internet Content Filtering
Appendix C: Policy 7550 Dignity for All Students

II. RISK REDUCTION, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Program Initiatives

The District has developed a number of programs and activities to aid in risk reduction. These initiatives are run at different age groups within the District. Examples of the topics covered:

- Programs concerned with bullying and violence prevention.
- Collaboration with the Washington County Office of Emergency Services
- Dignity For All Students Act (DASA) training
- Mandated Emergency Response, Violence Prevention and Mental Health Training.
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
- Collaborative arrangements with State and local law enforcement officials designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained,

including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations and are effectively and fairly recruited.

- Nonviolent conflict resolution programs
- Peer mediation and restorative justice programs.
- Extended day and other school safety programs.

Security Procedures

The District has attempted to enhance the security of its facilities through a number of security procedures, including the following:

- All visitors entering the school building are directed to the Main Office to provide identification and receive identification (printed lapel sticker). Anyone who is found in the building without identification is directed back to the Main Office.
- Digital video surveillance systems are installed in district facilities. Video surveillance capabilities will be reviewed and expanded as needed.
- Security audits are regularly conducted by local law enforcement, local fire department officials, insurance companies, and risk management personnel.
- Fort Edward UFSD policy and procedures related to emergency protocols are confidential and not available to the public.

Consideration of Silent Panic Alarm Systems

Governor Hochul signed Alyssa's Law, Chapter 227 of the Laws of 2022 (Chapter 227) which amends Education Law §2801-a to require that district-wide school safety teams consider the usefulness of silent panic alarm systems when reviewing and amending district-wide safety plans. District-wide school safety teams shall consider, as part of their review of the comprehensive district-wide safety plan, the installation of a panic alarm system.

Section 155.17(b) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education defines silent panic alarm systems as, "Panic alarm system means a silent security system signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a life-threatening or emergency situation requiring a response from local law enforcement or, in the case of a school building located in a municipality in which there is no municipal police department, a location designated by the superintendent of state police and may include one or more of the following: wired panic button or buttons, wireless panic button or buttons or a mobile or computer application."

The District Wide School Safety team will evaluate and consider silent panic alarms on an annual basis.

Training, Drills, and Exercises

Trauma Informed Drills

The district will perform emergency drills in a trauma informed manner. The district will avoid using tactics in training and drills that may introduce or activate trauma, such as the use of props, actors, simulations, or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting, incident of violence, or other emergency, or inclusion of developmentally or age-inappropriate content. These drills may inadvertently prompt a negative emotional or psychological response in staff or students because of previous exposure(s) to trauma.

Drill Procedures

The District shall practice emergency response procedures under its District-Wide School Safety Plan and each of its Building-Level Emergency Response Plans, where possible, in cooperation with local law enforcement, emergency preparedness plan officials, and other first responders as follows:

- Evacuation and Lockdown drills shall be conducted with students at least twelve times in each school year, eight of the required drills shall be held between September first and December thirty-first of each such year.
- Eight of all such drills shall be evacuation drills, four of which shall be through use of the fire escapes on buildings where fire escapes are provided or through the use of identified secondary means of egress, such as through different corridors, hallways, stairways and exit doors. Six evacuation drills will be conducted by December thirty-first.
- Four of all such required drills shall be Lockdown drills. Two Lockdown drills will be conducted by December thirty-first.
- The school district buildings may use temporary visual barriers to create a safe space during lockdown situations.
- Drills shall be conducted at different times of the school day.
- Students shall be instructed in the procedure to be followed in the event that a fire occurs during the lunch period or assembly, provided however, that such additional instruction may be waived where a drill is held during the regular school lunch period or assembly.
- Four additional drills shall be held in each school year during the hours after sunset and before sunrise in school buildings in which students are provided with sleeping accommodations.
- At least two additional drills shall be held during summer school in buildings where summer school is conducted, and one of such drills shall be held during the first week of summer school.
- Parents or persons in parental relation shall be notified at least one week prior to the drill.
- One Emergency Dismissal drill shall be conducted to test emergency response procedures that require early dismissal, at a time not to occur more than 15 minutes earlier than the normal dismissal time.
- Such drills shall test the usefulness of the communications and transportation system during emergencies.

- Drills conducted during the school day with students present shall be conducted in a trauma-informed, developmentally, and age-appropriate manner and shall not include props, actors, or simulations or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting or other act of violence or emergency.
- With the exception of evacuation drills, at the time that drills are conducted, students and staff shall be informed that the activities being conducted are a drill.
- The District may choose to conduct tabletop exercises as a training resource and may include a discussion-based activity for staff in an informal classroom or meeting type setting to discuss their roles during an emergency and their responses to a sample emergency situation.

If the district chooses to opt to participate in full-scale exercises in conjunction with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials that include props, actors, or simulations or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting or other act of violence or emergency, such exercises ***shall not be conducted on a regular school day or when school activities such as athletics are occurring on school grounds***. Such exercises shall not include students without written consent from parents or persons in parental relation.

Drill Notification for Persons in Parental Relation

The District shall be required to develop a schedule and process to notify parents, and persons in parental relation of scheduled drills which will include students. The building administrators are responsible for indicating in their Building-Level Emergency Response Plan the specific mechanism in which such persons will be informed and the timeframe in which this will occur prior to the drill being conducted. Drills held at the District or building level will be followed by a debriefing with participant stake holders to identify areas of success and opportunities for improvement. Building representatives will provide a report to the District-Wide Safety Team on drill status during regularly scheduled district-wide safety meetings.

Training

The District has established policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for employees and students. Training includes:

- An annual review of the building-level emergency response plan and general employee awareness training for building employees conducted by each principal or their designee.
- The annual early go home drill to test evacuation and sheltering procedures.
- Each school building conducts evacuation drills throughout the course of the year in compliance with the NYSED schedule for the purpose of familiarizing employees and students with emergency procedures.

Topics for training will include general security and safety measures, safety intervention strategies, building security awareness, violence prevention, mental health, and reporting requirements and procedures.

Training for school staff, including bus drivers and monitors, includes awareness of behaviors that may signal emotional distress or violent tendencies, as well as protocols for reporting concerns. Staff also receive annual instruction on the District Code of Conduct and participate in professional development related to threat assessment and trauma-informed practices. For example, training may cover de-escalation techniques, recognizing early signs of behavioral escalation, and strategies for supporting at-risk students. These sessions are conducted or coordinated by the Superintendent and are available through staff development days, on-demand modules, and in-person workshops.

Assignment of Responsibilities

Faculty and Staff

Faculty, aides, and monitors shall have responsibility for:

- Monitoring halls, lavatories, locker rooms, locker bays, and similar areas, assuring orderly passage of students and pre-emptive intervention in potentially disruptive situations.
- Observation of the general property, including the immediate outside area/perimeter of the building(s), with an obligation to report suspicious activity to district or building administration.
- Overseeing study halls, cafeterias, or other areas of student assemblage with the goal of assisting to maintain an orderly, safe environment.

School Safety Personnel

School safety personnel have a critical role in violence prevention. The following represents a description of the responsibilities of school safety personnel in schools:

- Oversight of school building security procedures.
- Oversight and/or advisement on school security technology.
- Participation in the District Wide School Safety Team and Building Level Emergency Response Team.
- Development of relationships with students and staff.

The memorandum of understanding outlining the role and responsibilities of school safety personnel can be found in Appendix F.

Building Administrators

The Building Principal or their designee shall serve as the School Safety Representative for the school building. The responsibilities of the School Safety Representative are as follows:

- Monitor hallways, entryways, exits and outside grounds during school hours for unusual occurrences or unauthorized visitors.
- Act as building liaison in communicating building-level safety issues or concerns.
 - Represent the building on the District-Wide Health and Safety Committee.
 - Serve on Building-Level Emergency Response Planning Team.

- Attend school safety meetings and be a resource on school safety and security issues for building employees.
- Develop plans and strategies for building security, crime and violence prevention, safety planning and employee training.
- Participate in school incident investigations.
- Respond to all school emergencies as part of the building's Emergency Response Plan.
- Coordinate annual school safety multi-hazard training for students and employees. Multi-hazard training shall include crisis intervention, emergency response and management.
- Ensure that employees and students shall receive annual training and drill practice on protocols for evacuation, sheltering, lockdown, relocate to hallway, fire emergency, bus drills, and appropriate violence prevention strategies.
- Designate procedure for informing substitute teaching and non-teaching employees of school safety protocols.
- Comply and encourage compliance with all school safety and security policies and procedures established by the Board of Education.
- Attend professional development activities on school safety and violence prevention.
- All school safety personnel shall be provided with training on violence prevention and school safety. All training courses shall receive prior approval from the Superintendent of Schools or their designee.

Hiring and Screening of School Personnel

The following hiring and screening practices are followed for the hiring of all personnel:

Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks

For all employees hired by schools, the District completes a fingerprinting and criminal background check prior to appointment. No employee will work in the District until fingerprint clearance is received. Employees include: any person receiving compensation for work from schools; any employee of a contracted service provider involved in direct student contact; any worker assigned to a school under a public assistance employment program (includes part-time employees and substitutes).

Reference Checks

References are thoroughly checked prior to extending an employment offer.

- Reference check forms are used for instructional, non-instructional and transportation personnel.
- Reference checks are completed and reviewed by the administrative team along with the application.
- Prior to making a job offer to a prospective employee, the following mandatory questions are asked during reference checks with immediate and/or past supervisors:
 - Do you have knowledge of any violations of safety or security by (prospective employee) related to students, employees or others?

- Why did (prospective employee) leave your employment? Or, do you know why (prospective employee) is leaving your employment?
- Would you rehire (prospective employee)? If no, why not?

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The District has implemented policies and procedures related to the early detection of potentially violent behaviors. The Principal is responsible for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to the identification of family, community, and environmental factors to teachers, administrators, school personnel, including school bus drivers and monitors, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information. In addition, employees shall receive training on the District’s Code-of-Conduct and awareness training on violent behaviors, to be conducted or coordinated by the Superintendent of Schools.

The Fort Edward Union Free School District utilizes a multi-disciplinary behavioral threat assessment team at the building-level which assess whether certain exhibited behaviors or actions need intervention or other support. All district staff are trained annually on the purpose and procedures of the team. The team meets periodically throughout the school year to discuss behavioral intervention techniques, suicide ideation, and any other topics deemed necessary.

The membership of the team is multi-disciplinary and provides an array of opinions and perspectives when evaluating a student. While an initial assessment may occur with just a mental health professional and a school administrator, follow-up steps (if necessary) should include personnel who are specific to the student. For example, if a student is involved with sports, the team could include a coach, or the team may bring in teachers who are familiar with the student. Ideally, teams will include representatives who provide differing perspectives (e.g. mental health and administration) and professionals who are familiar with the at-risk student (e.g. teachers and coaches). An example team membership includes:

- Building administrators
- School-based mental health professional (Guidance counselor/school psychologist/school social worker)
- Teacher/coach (Who is familiar with the student)
- School resource officer
- Behavior specialist
- Others who may know the student

This team can expand or contract as necessary, but functions best when it has multiple perspectives and experiences. An overview of the process is included in Appendix D.

C. Hazard Identification

The District-Wide School Safety Plan requires the identification of potential hazards and emergency response protocols. Each Building-level Emergency Response Team has identified both internal and external hazards that may warrant protective actions.

The location of potential hazards, such as chemical storage, propane & motor fuel storage, potential fire hazards, electrical hazards, playground equipment, etc. are documented in a building and facility diagram. Site hazards are identified in the County/Town Hazard Assessment in each of the plans.

III. RESPONSE

A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)

In cases of a serious violent incident, the District would use the procedure listed below to meet the requirements for notification and activation. A serious violent incident is an incident of violent criminal conduct that is, or appears to be, life threatening and warrants the evacuation of students and employees because of an imminent threat to their safety or health. This includes, but is not limited to, the use or threatened use of a firearm, explosive, bomb, incendiary device, chemical, or biological weapons, knives or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or serious injury, riots, hostage-taking, or kidnapping.

Communications systems are:

Internal

Teachers and building employees	Public address system, email, text message, other electronic communications
Students	Public address system, verbally from supervising teachers, other electronic communications
Superintendent of Schools	Phone, email, radio, verbal communication, text message, other electronic communications
Buildings and Grounds	Phone, radio, other electronic communications
Board of Education	Phone, E-mail, other electronic communications

External

New York State Police:	911 or (518) 783-3211
Washington County Sheriff's Office	911 or (518) 747-4623
Fort Edward Fire Department	911 or (518) 747-5127
Fort Edward Rescue Squad	911 or (518) 747-6198
Parents	District Website: https://www.fortedward.org/ District Office – (518) 747-4529 Blackboard Messenger Texts

	E-Mail Notifications Local Media/TV Stations
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The Director of Communications or designee would be responsible for conveying emergency information to educational facilities within the district. The Director of Communications or designee would take appropriate steps to secure the following information about each educational agency within the District: Number of students, number of employees, transportation requirements associated with the evacuation of each facility and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each agency. Such information would be updated at least annually. Each such agency would report material changes to such data, in writing, within seven days of such change.

Information will be provided to parents, guardians or persons in parental relation in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal through the use of telephone, email, messenger system, local and regional radio and TV stations, or website postings. The radio and TV stations are the same stations that are used to announce official delays or closings. Information regarding communication procedures is provided to parents through the website and building handbooks. Additionally, if an event occurs at the campus where students cannot be released immediately, a parent/community public information center may be established at another campus building. In the event that this public information center is established, parents and community members are encouraged not to report to the main campus where a building may be in crisis, but rather gather at a designated meeting place where regular public information statements will be made by the Director of Communications or designee.

B. Emergency Response Protocols

The Fort Edward Union Free School District has a comprehensive multi-hazard Emergency Response Plan for the school building that is updated annually. The school district provides annual training to all staff and faculty on the school district’s emergency response actions, posts information in each classroom, includes this informaton in each classroom’s emergency folder, and discusses it regularly throughout the year during drills, tabletop exercises, and faculty meetings.

The district uses a standardized emergency response protocol framework which includes the following actions:

Shelter/Shelter-in-Place: Used to shelter students and staff inside the building because it is safer inside the building than outside.

Hold-in-Place: Used to restrict movement inside the building while dealing with a short-term incident, such as a medical emergency.

Evacuate: Used when students and staff must leave the building.

Secure Lockout: Used when students and staff must remain inside **locked school buildings** during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.

LOCKDOWN: Used to secure students and staff inside **locked classrooms** during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.

Chain of Command

Benjamin Halsey	Superintendent of Schools
Christopher Culnan	Middle High School Principal
Jessica Smatko	Elementary Principal
Christopher Rayder	Business Administrator

Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

In the event of an act of violence or implied or direct threat, the district shall follow the following protocol:

- Follow the emergency response procedure(s) as directed by the Building Principal.
- Use of employees trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Inform Building Principal and School Resource Officer 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, and include the possible use of the Emergency Response Team.

Acts of Violence

In the event of serious acts of violence, district personnel shall follow the following protocol:

- Follow the emergency response procedure(s) as directed by the Building Principal as included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.
- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
- If necessary or threat is imminent, initiate Lockdown procedures and contact appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Monitor situation; adjust response as appropriate; if necessary, initiate early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuation procedures.

Follow-up actions and debrief of the violent incident should include:

1. Investigation of the incident by Building Principal and law enforcement, as necessary.
2. Preparation of written accounts of the incident by all involved.
3. Review of written accounts by the Building Principal for any disparities.

4. Appropriate disciplinary action according to the code of conduct.
5. Review of the entire incident by administration for future planning.
 - a. What happened?
 - b. Where did it happen?
 - c. When did it happen?
 - d. Why did it happen?
 - e. How did it happen?
 - f. How many individuals were involved?
 - g. Are the individuals associated with a group?
 - h. How could the incident have been prevented?
 - i. What warning signs were missed?
 - j. What can we do to prevent a future incident?
6. Counseling or other needed support for the victim(s), other students and staff involved in the incident.
7. Necessary reporting and parental notification.

Each school's Building-Level emergency response plan lists building specific response actions to criminal acts, bomb threats, civil disturbance, intrusion, hostage taking, kidnapping, as well as technological and natural disasters.

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

The administration shall use the following process in making arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency service organizations and local government agencies:

- Superintendent of Schools/Designee in an emergency contacts dispatch point or 911 center for fire or EMS response.
- Superintendent of Schools/Designee contacts highest-ranking local government official for notification and/or assistance.

Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials

The Administration shall use the following protocol 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:

- Superintendent of Schools/Designee in an emergency will contact emergency management coordinator and/or the highest-ranking local government official for obtaining advice and assistance.
- The District has identified resources for an emergency from the following agencies: Red Cross, fire department, police, private industry, private individuals, religious organizations and others.

District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

The district maintains an inventory of resources available during an emergency, including fuel sources, communications, food service capability, maintenance vehicle lists, and medical supplies and AED, CPR, and First Aid trained staff.

Procedures to Coordinate the Use of School District Resources and Person-power during Emergencies

The District shall use the following procedure to coordinate the use of school resources and person-power during emergencies:

- The Building Principal of the affected facility shall contact the Superintendent of Schools or their designee and request the necessary person-power or resources.
- The Superintendent of Schools or the highest-ranking person in the chain of command shall assess the request and allocate personnel and resources as necessary.

Protective Action Options

The district shall follow the following protocols in assessing the appropriate protective action option. The decision to cancel school, to dismiss early, shelter in place, or evacuate shall be made in cooperation with state and local emergency responders, as appropriate.

- School Cancellation
 - Monitor any situation that may warrant a school cancellation – Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
 - Make determination – Superintendent of Schools.
 - Contact local media – Superintendent of Schools or Director of Communications.
- School Delay
 - Monitor any situation that may warrant school delay – Building Administrators/ Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, delay opening of school.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to coordinate transportation issues.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of delayed opening.
 - Set up information center so that parents may make inquiries as to situation.
 - Provide for safety and security of employees and students who do come to school.
- Early Dismissal
 - Monitor situation – Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, close school – Superintendent of Schools.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal.

- Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation.
- Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.
- Evacuation (before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes)
 - Determine the level of threat – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - Clear all evacuation routes and sites prior to evacuation.
 - Evacuate all employees and students to pre-arranged evacuation sites.
 - Account for all student and employee population. Report any missing employees or students to Building Principal.
 - Make determination regarding early dismissal – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - If determination was made to dismiss early, contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal.
 - Ensure adult supervision or continued school supervision/security.
 - Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation.
 - Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.
- Sheltering Sites (internal and external)
 - Determine the level of threat – Superintendent of Schools/Incident Commander /Designee.
 - Determine location of sheltering depending on nature of incident.
 - Account for all students and employees. Report any missing employees or students to designee.
 - Determine other occupants in the building.
 - Make appropriate arrangements for human needs.
 - Take appropriate safety precautions.
 - Establish a Director of Communications to provide information and current status of the situation to parents and other inquiring parties.
 - Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.

Remote Instruction Plan

The Fort Edward UFSD School District has created a remote instruction plan and intends to enact the plan in the case of an emergency school closure where appropriate. Please find the district's remote instruction plan in Appendix E.

Continuation of Operations Plan

In accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraph m of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a the District has adopted a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work

for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing and can be found in Appendix G.

Closure of a School Building

In accordance with Section 155.17(f) of the Commissioner’s Regulations, the District has established a protocol for reporting to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the BOCES district superintendent whenever a building-level emergency response plan is activated and results in the closure of a school building.

Reporting to NYSED

In the event of an emergency that requires the activation of the District-Wide School Safety Plan or a Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, and that results in the closure of a school building for in-person instruction, the superintendent or building principal will contact the BOCES district superintendent via telephone or email, and notify the Commissioner of Education via the NYSED “Report of School Closure” portal as soon as is practicable following the decision to close the building.

Even in cases where remote instruction continues during the emergency, a Report of School Closure must still be submitted. This includes closures where instruction is temporarily relocated to another facility or conducted through virtual platforms.

Required Follow-Up Reporting

Once it is deemed safe to re-open the building and resume in-person instruction, the Superintendent or building principal will complete a corresponding “Report of School Re-Opening” using the NYSED portal. This report must include:

- The actual duration of the closure;
- The instructional location and modality during the closure (e.g., remote, hybrid, alternate site);
- Any additional details that were not available at the time of initial closure.

Scope and Applicability: Closures that require this reporting include, but are not limited to:

- Natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, floods, earthquakes);
- Infrastructure failures (e.g., extended power outages, water supply issues);
- Public health emergencies (e.g., infectious disease outbreaks);
- Threats to safety (e.g., bomb threats, active shooter incidents);
- Extraordinary adverse weather events, excluding routine snow days.

Routine weather-related closures due to snow do not require submission of a Report of School Closure or notification to the BOCES district superintendent.

By following this reporting protocol, the District ensures transparency, accountability, and compliance with state requirements while supporting the safety and continuity of learning for all students.

IV. RECOVERY

Recovery addresses the help needed for all involved to heal and to restore the school community to “normal” operations. The District Plan supports the building-level plan by deploying district resources that support the school’s building-level emergency response team and the post-incident response team.

A debriefing by the Building Level Post-Incident Response Team is an essential part of the recovery phase following an emergency incident. The debriefing will be used in part to evaluate the district's plan for possible revisions.

Central Administration Support for Buildings

The Fort Edward Union Free School District provides resources and personnel to support the Building-Level Emergency Response Team and Post-Incident Response Team. The building-level plan identifies the Incident Command System primary and alternate appointments, and in the aftermath of an emergency, the district will facilitate the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment. Additionally, members of the Post-Incident Response Team will be provided with sufficient staffing to allow the rotation of personnel, and the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment.

Disaster Mental Health Services

The district will work with the School Psychologist, Guidance Director, and School Nurse to coordinate disaster mental health resources through the Washington County Mental Health Department, community sources, neighboring school districts, and other disaster mental health providers to fully support members of the crisis response team.

If necessary, the district will coordinate with the statewide plan for disaster mental health services to assure that the school has access to federal, state and local mental health resources in the event of a violent incident.

Short-term actions for recovery include:

- Mental health counseling (students and staff)
- Building security
- Facility restoration
- Post-incident response critique
- Other

Long-term actions for recovery include:

- Mental health counseling (monitor for post-traumatic stress behavior)
- Building security

- Mitigation (to reduce the likelihood of occurrence and impact if it does occur again)
- Other

In conclusion, the Fort Edward Union Free School District's safety-related programs and procedures are under the oversight of the Chief Emergency Officer and will be revised as necessary to effectively respond to evolving circumstances.

Appendix A: Policy 8210 Safety Conditions and Prevention Instruction

SUBJECT: SAFETY CONDITIONS AND PREVENTION INSTRUCTION

The practice of safety will be considered an integral part of a well-rounded education. A well-rounded education contributes to student success. The District will strive to provide students with an education that will enable them to achieve and maintain a safe life.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Instruction in Health Education

As part of its health education program, the District will provide appropriate instruction for all students concerning Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Accurate information concerning the nature of the disease, methods of transmission, and means of prevention will be provided in an age-appropriate manner, will be consistent with community values, and will stress that abstinence is the most appropriate and effective premarital protection against AIDS.

A representative community advisory group consisting of appropriate school personnel, Board members, parents, religious representatives, and other community members will be established in order to make recommendations for curriculum content, implementation, and evaluation of an AIDS instructional program. The Board will determine the content of the curriculum, approve its implementation, and be responsible for the evaluation of the District's AIDS instruction program.

Appropriate training will be provided for instructional staff. Instructional materials will be provided to parents who request these materials.

No student will be required to receive instruction concerning the methods of AIDS prevention if their parent or legal guardian files with the principal a written request that the student not participate in this instruction, with an assurance that the student will receive this instruction at home.

AIDS instruction in the elementary grades will be taught by the regular classroom teachers, while this instruction in the middle and high school grades will be a part of the required health education curriculum.

Hands-Only Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Instruction

High school students will be provided instruction in hands-only CPR and the use of an AED as part of the District's health education program. Standards for this instruction will be based on a nationally recognized instructional program that utilizes the most current guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency cardiovascular care issued by the American Heart Association or a substantially equivalent organization, that are consistent with the requirements

of the programs adopted by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross, and that will incorporate instruction designed to:

Recognize the signs of a possible cardiac arrest and to call 911;

Provide an opportunity to demonstrate the psychomotor skills necessary to perform hands-only compression cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

Provide awareness in the use of an AED.

A student with a disability may be exempted from the requirement for instruction in hands-only CPR and the use of AEDs if the student's individualized education program (IEP) or accommodation plan developed pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that the student is physically or cognitively unable to perform the tasks included in the instruction.

Conservation of Natural Resources

Instruction relating to the conservation of the natural resources of New York State will be provided in accordance with law and regulation.

Fire and Arson Prevention/Injury Prevention/Life Safety Education

District administration will provide instruction in fire and arson prevention, injury prevention, and life safety education relating to protection against injury or death and property loss or damage as a result of criminally initiated or other preventable fire.

This instruction will include materials to educate children on the dangers of falsely reporting a criminal incident, an impending explosion or fire emergency involving danger to life or property, an impending catastrophe, or a life safety emergency. This instruction will be given to all students for a period of at least 45 minutes during each month that school is in session.

Safety and Accident Prevention in the Schools

Instruction in courses in technology education, science, home and career skills, health and safety, physical education, and art will include and emphasize safety and accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in relevant courses. Instructors will teach and enforce all safety procedures relating to the particular courses, including wearing protective eye devices during appropriate activities.

Eye Safety

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that eye safety devices are distributed as necessary and that they are properly repaired, cleaned, and stored to prevent the spread of germs or diseases after use. Each classroom teacher is responsible for the safe and proper use of all instructional materials and equipment by students in their classroom.

Instruction on Prevention of Child Abduction

All students in grades K through 8 in District schools will receive instruction designed to prevent the abduction of children provided by or under the direct supervision of regular classroom teachers. The Board will provide appropriate training and curriculum materials for the regular classroom teachers who provide this instruction. However, at the Board's discretion, this instruction may be provided by any other public or private agency.

The Commissioner of Education will provide technical assistance to assist in developing curricula for these courses of study which must be age appropriate and developed according to the needs and abilities of students at successive grade levels in order to provide awareness skills, information, self-confidence, and support to aid in the prevention of child abduction.

For purposes of developing these courses of study, the Board may establish local advisory councils or utilize the school-based shared decision making and planning committee established under the Commissioner's regulations to make recommendations concerning the content and implementation of these courses. Alternatively, the District may utilize courses of instruction developed by consortia of school districts, boards of cooperative educational services, other school districts, or any other public or private agency. The advisory council will consist of, but not be limited to, parents, school trustees and Board members, appropriate school personnel, business and community representatives, and law enforcement personnel having experience in the prevention of child abduction.

Instruction on Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Sexual Abuse

All students in grades K through 8 in District schools will receive instruction designed to educate students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel about the prevention of child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse. This instruction may be included as part of the District's health education program.

Curriculum addressing this topic will be developed in consultation with school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, parents, and community members. The curriculum will be designed to:

Assist students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel in identifying child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation;

Provide awareness, assistance, referral, and resource information for students and families who are victims of child sexual abuse and/or child sexual exploitation; and

Be aligned to grade objectives prescribed by the Commissioner in guidance.

Instruction on Child Development and Parenting Skills

Instruction regarding child development and parenting skills may be offered by the District as part of either its home economics or health education program.

Education Law Sections 409-a, 803-a, 803-b, 804-b, 804-c, 804-d, 808, 810, and 3204
8 NYCRR Sections 100.2(c), 135.3, and 141.10

Appendix B: Policy 8271 Internet Safety/Internet Content Filtering

SUBJECT: INTERNET SAFETY/INTERNET CONTENT FILTERING

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the District will ensure the use of technology protection measures (i.e., filtering or blocking of access to certain material on the Internet) on all District computers with Internet access. These technology protection measures apply to Internet access by both adults and minors with regard to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or, with respect to the use of computers by minors, considered harmful to students. The District will provide for the education of students regarding appropriate online behavior including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and regarding cyberbullying awareness and response. Further, appropriate monitoring of online activities of minors, as determined by the building or program supervisor, will also be enforced to ensure the safety of students when accessing the Internet.

Further, the Board's decision to utilize technology protection measures and other safety procedures for staff and students when accessing the Internet fosters the educational mission of the District, including the selection of appropriate instructional materials and activities to enhance the schools' programs and to help ensure the safety of personnel and students while online.

However, no filtering technology can guarantee that staff and students will be prevented from accessing any inappropriate sites. Proper safety procedures, as deemed appropriate by the applicable administrator or program supervisor, will be provided to ensure compliance with the CIPA.

In addition to the use of technology protection measures, the monitoring of online activities and access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet may include, but will not be limited to, the following guidelines:

- a. Ensuring the presence of a teacher and/or other appropriate District personnel when students are accessing the Internet including, but not limited to, the supervision of minors when using email, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. As determined by the appropriate building administrator, the use of email, chat rooms, as well as social networking websites, may be blocked as deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students;
- b. Monitoring logs of access in order to keep track of the websites visited by students as a measure to restrict access to materials harmful to minors;
- c. In compliance with this Internet Safety Policy as well as the District's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), unauthorized access, and other unlawful activities by minors are prohibited

by the District and student violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action;
and

- d. Appropriate supervision and notification to minors regarding the prohibition as to unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding students.

The determination of what is "inappropriate" for minors will be determined by the District and/or designated school official(s), the definition of which may vary depending on the circumstances of the situation and the age of the students involved in online research.

The terms "minor," "child pornography," "harmful to minors," "obscene," "technology protection measure," "sexual act," and "sexual contact" will be as defined in accordance with CIPA and other applicable laws or regulations.

Under certain specified circumstances, the blocking or filtering technology measure(s) may be disabled for adults engaged in bona fide research or other lawful purposes. The power to disable can only be exercised by an administrator, supervisor, or other person authorized by the District.

The District will provide certification, in accordance with the requirements of CIPA, to document the District's adoption and enforcement of its Internet Safety Policy, including the operation and enforcement of technology protection measures (i.e., blocking or filtering of access to certain material on the Internet) for all District computers with Internet access.

Internet Safety Instruction

In accordance with New York State Education Law, the District may provide to students in grades K through 12 instruction designed to promote the proper and safe use of the Internet. The Commissioner will provide technical assistance in the development of curricula for this course of study which will be age appropriate and developed according to the needs and abilities of students at successive grade levels in order to provide awareness, skills, information, and support to aid in the safe usage of the Internet.

Additionally, students will be educated on appropriate interactions with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, as well as cyberbullying awareness and response.

Access to Inappropriate Content/Material and Use of Personal Technology or Electronic Devices

Despite the existence of District policy, regulations, and guidelines, it is virtually impossible to completely prevent access to content or material that may be considered inappropriate for students. Students may have the ability to access this content or material from their home, other locations off school premises, and/or with a student's own personal technology or electronic device on school grounds or at school events.

The District is not responsible for inappropriate content or material accessed via a student's own personal technology or electronic device or via an unfiltered Internet connection received through a student's own personal technology or electronic device.

Notification/Authorization

The District's AUP will be disseminated to parents and students in order to provide notice of the school's requirements, expectations, and student's obligations when accessing the Internet.

The District has provided reasonable public notice and has held at least one public hearing or meeting to address this policy prior to Board adoption. Additional public notice and a hearing or meeting is not necessary if and when amendments are made to this policy.

This policy must be made available to the FCC upon request. Furthermore, appropriate actions will be taken to ensure the ready availability to the public of this policy as well as any other District policies relating to the use of technology.

This policy is required to be retained by the school for at least five years after the funding year in which the policy was relied upon to obtain E-rate funding.

20 USC Section 7131

47 USC Sections 254(h) and 254(l)

47 CFR Part 54

Education Law Section 814

Appendix C: Policy 7550 Dignity for All Students

SUBJECT: DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

Overview

The District seeks to create an environment free of harassment, bullying, and discrimination; to foster civility in its schools; and to prevent conduct that is inconsistent with its educational mission. This policy is just one component of the District's overall commitment to maintaining a discrimination and harassment-free educational and work environment.

The District, therefore, prohibits all forms of harassment and bullying of students by employees or other students on school property and at school functions. The District further prohibits discrimination against students, including, but not limited to, discriminatory acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by employees or other students on school property and at school functions.

In addition, other acts of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination that occur off school property may be subject to discipline or other corrective action, where such acts create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation, or abuse might reach school property.

The District adopts this policy as part of its effort to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination of students. The District will promptly respond to reports of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination of students, ensure that all investigations are conducted within a reasonably prompt time frame and under a predictable fair grievance process that provides due process protections, and impose disciplinary measures and implement remedies when warranted.

Inquiries about this policy may be directed to the District's Dignity Act Coordinator(s) (DAC(s)).

Dignity Act Coordinator

In each of its schools, the District will designate at least one employee to serve as the DAC and receive reports of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. Each DAC will be:

- a. Approved by the Board;
- b. Licensed and/or certified by the Commissioner as a classroom teacher, school counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, school administrator or supervisor, or superintendent;

- c. Instructed in the provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act and its implementing regulations;
- d. Thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex;
- e. Provided with training which addresses the social patterns of harassment, bullying, and discrimination, including, but not limited to, those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and sex;
- f. Provided with training in the identification and mitigation of harassment, bullying, and discrimination; and
- g. Provided with training in strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias, and aggression in educational settings.

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

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

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

Training and Awareness

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

- a. Raise awareness and sensitivity to potential acts of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;
- b. Address social patterns of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;
- c. Inform employees on the identification and mitigation of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;
- d. Enable employees to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment, bullying, and discrimination;
- e. Make employees aware of the effects of harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, and discrimination on students;
- f. Provide strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias, and aggression;
- g. Include safe and supportive school climate concepts in curriculum and classroom management; and
- h. Ensure the effective implementation of school policy on conduct and discipline.

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

Internal Reports and Investigations of Harassment, Bullying, and/or Discrimination

All District employees who witness or receive an oral or written report of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination are required to take action. District employees must make an oral report promptly to the Superintendent or principal, their designee, or the DAC not later than one school day after witnessing or receiving an oral or written report of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. No later than two school days after making the oral report, the District employee must file a written report with the Superintendent or principal, their designee, or the DAC.

The Superintendent or principal, their designee, or the DAC will lead or supervise the thorough investigation of all reports of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination and ensure that all investigations are promptly completed after the receipt of a written report. In investigating any allegation, the investigator may seek the assistance of the District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer(s) (CRCO(s)) and/or Title IX Coordinator(s) in investigating, responding to, and remedying complaints of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.

Additionally, other District policies and documents address harassment, bullying, and discrimination of students. These policies and documents may include: Policy #3420 -- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment in the District; Policy #3421 -- Title IX and Sex Discrimination; Policy #7551 -- Sexual Harassment of Students; and the District's *Code of Conduct*. All complaints will be handled in accordance with the applicable District policies and/or documents.

The determination as to which District policies and/or documents are applicable is fact specific, and the DAC may work with other District staff such as the District's CRCO(s) and/or Title IX Coordinator(s) to determine which District policies and/or documents are applicable to the specific facts of the complaint.

When an investigation verifies a material incident of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, the Superintendent or principal, their designee, or the DAC will take prompt action, consistent with applicable laws and regulations as well as the District's *Code of Conduct*, reasonably calculated to end the harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, eliminate any hostile environment, create a more positive school culture and climate, prevent recurrence of the behavior, and ensure the safety of the student or students against whom the behavior was directed.

The Superintendent or principal, their designee, or the DAC will promptly notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when it is believed that any harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.

Reporting Incidents

Reporting Incidents to the Superintendent

At least once during each school year, each building principal will provide a report on data and trends related to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination to the Superintendent in a manner prescribed by the District. This report will be used to submit the annual School Safety and the Educational Climate (SSEC) Summary Data Collection form to the State Education Department (SED).

Reporting of Material Incidents to the Commissioner of Education

Each school year, the District will submit to the Commissioner a report of material incidents of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination that occurred during the school year in accordance

with law and regulation. This report will be submitted in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner, on or before the basic educational data system (BEDS) reporting deadline or other date determined by the Commissioner.

Prohibition of Retaliatory Behavior (Commonly Known as "Whistle-Blower" Protection)

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

Publication of District Policy

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

Application

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

Education Law Sections 10-18 and 2801
8 NYCRR Section 100.2

Appendix D: Enhancing School Safety Using A Threat Assessment Model An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence

This guide was prepared by the staff of the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) (2018)

INTRODUCTION

When incidents of school violence occur, they leave a profound and lasting impact on the school, the community, and our nation as a whole. Ensuring safe environments for elementary and secondary school students, educators, administrators, and others is essential. This operational guide was developed to provide fundamental direction on how to prevent incidents of targeted school violence, that is, when a student specifically selects a school or a member of the school community for harm. The content in this guide is based on information developed by the U.S. Secret Service, Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division, National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)

When establishing threat assessment capabilities within K-12 schools, keep in mind that there is no profile of a student attacker. There have been male and female attackers, high-achieving students with good grades as well as poor performers. These acts of violence were committed by students who were loners and socially isolated, and those who were well-liked and popular. Rather than focusing solely on a student's personality traits or school performance, we can learn much more about a student's risk for violence by working through the threat assessment process, which is designed to gather the most relevant information about the student's communications and behaviors, the negative or stressful events the student has experienced, and the resources the student possesses to overcome those setbacks and challenges.

CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TARGETED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN

Ensuring the safety of our schools involves multiple components, including physical security, emergency management, and violence prevention efforts in the form of a threat assessment process. This process begins with establishing a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan. The plan includes forming a multidisciplinary threat assessment team, establishing central reporting mechanisms, identifying behaviors of concern, defining the threshold for law enforcement intervention, identifying risk management strategies, promoting safe school climates, and providing training to stakeholders. It can also help schools mitigate threats from a variety of individuals, including students, employees, or parents. This guide provides basic instructions for schools on creating a targeted violence prevention plan, the focus of which is to decrease the risk of students engaging in harm to themselves or the school community. These recommendations serve as the starting point on a path to implementation that will need to be customized to the specific needs of your school, your student body, and your community. When creating these plans, schools should consult with legal representatives to ensure that they comply with any applicable state and federal laws or regulations.

STEP 1. ESTABLISH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The first step in developing a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan is to establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team (hereafter referred to as the "Team") of individuals who will direct, manage, and document the threat assessment process. The Team will receive reports about concerning students and situations, gather additional information, assess the risk posed to the school community, and develop intervention and management strategies to mitigate any risk of harm. Some considerations for establishing a Team include:

Some schools may pool their resources and have a single Team that serves an entire district or county, while other districts may choose to have a separate Team for each school.

Teams should include personnel from a **variety of disciplines** within the school community, including teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, school resource officers, mental health professionals, and school administrators. The multidisciplinary nature of the Team ensures that varying points of view will be represented and that access to information and resources will be broad.

The Team needs to have a **specifically designated leader**. This position is usually occupied by a senior administrator within the school.

Teams should establish **protocols and procedures** that are followed for each assessment, including who will interview the student of concern; who will talk to classmates, teachers, or parents; and who will be responsible for documenting the Team's efforts. Established protocols allow for a smoother assessment process as Team members will be aware of their own roles and responsibilities, as well as those of their colleagues.

Team members should meet whenever a concerning student or situation has been brought to their attention, but they should also **meet on a regular basis** to engage in discussions, role-playing scenarios, and other teambuilding and learning activities. This will provide members of the Team with opportunities to work together and learn their individual responsibilities so that when a crisis does arise, the Team will be able to operate more easily as a cohesive unit.

STEP 2. DEFINE PROHIBITED AND CONCERNING BEHAVIORS

Schools need to establish policies defining prohibited behaviors that are unacceptable and therefore warrant immediate intervention. These include threatening or engaging in violence, bringing a weapon to school, bullying or harassing others, and other concerning or criminal behaviors. Keep in mind that **concerning behaviors occur along a continuum**. School policies should also identify behaviors that may not necessarily be indicative of violence, but also warrant some type of intervention. These include a marked decline in performance; increased absenteeism; withdrawal or isolation; sudden or dramatic changes in behavior or appearance; drug or alcohol use; and erratic, depressive, and other emotional or mental health symptoms.

If these behaviors are observed or reported to the Team, schools can offer resources and supports in the form of mentoring and counseling, mental health care, tutoring, or social and family services.

The threshold for intervention should be relatively low so that Teams can identify students in distress before their behavior escalates to the point that classmates, teachers, or parents are concerned about their safety or the safety of others. It is much easier to intervene when the concern is related to a student's struggle to overcome personal setbacks, such as a romantic breakup, than when there are concerns about threats posed to others.

During the assessment process, Teams may identify other **concerning statements and actions** made by the student that may not already be addressed in their policies. Gathering information about these behaviors will help the Team assess whether the student is at risk for attacking the school or its students and identify strategies to mitigate that risk.

STEP 3. CREATE A CENTRAL REPORTING MECHANISM

Students may elicit concern from those around them in a variety of ways. They may make threatening or concerning statements in person, online, or in text messages; they may engage in observable risky behavior; or they may turn in assignments with statements or content that is

unusual or bizarre. When this occurs, those around the student need a method of reporting their concerns to the Team.

Schools can **establish one or more reporting mechanisms**, such as an online form posted on the school website, a dedicated email address or phone number, smart phone application platforms, or another mechanism that is accessible for a particular school community.

Students, teachers, staff, school resource officers, and parents **should be provided training and guidance on recognizing behaviors of concern, their roles and responsibilities in reporting the behavior, and how to report the information.**

Teams need to be sure that a team member proactively monitors all incoming reports and can **respond immediately** when someone's safety is concerned.

Regardless of what method schools choose to receive these reports, there should be an **option for passing information anonymously**, as students are more likely to report concerning or threatening information when they can do so without fear of retribution for coming forward.

The school community should feel confident that team members will be responsive to their concerns, and that **reports will be acted upon, kept confidential, and handled appropriately.**

STEP 4. DETERMINE THE THRESHOLD FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTION

The vast majority of incidents or concerns that are likely to be reported can be handled by school personnel using school or community resources. For example, the most common types of reports submitted to Safe2Tell Colorado during the 2016- 2017 school year were related to suicide, bullying, drugs, cutting (self-harm), and depression.² Some of these common reports may not require the involvement of law enforcement. Those that do warrant law enforcement intervention include threats of violence and planned school attacks, which constituted Safe2Tell's sixth and seventh most common types of reports, respectively.

Reports regarding student **behaviors involving weapons, threats of violence, physical violence, or concerns about an individual's safety** should immediately be reported to local law enforcement. This is one reason **why including a school resource officer or local law enforcement officer** on the Team is beneficial.

If a school resource officer is not available to serve on the Team, schools should set a clear threshold for times and situations **when law enforcement will be asked to support or take over an assessment.** For example, it might be necessary to have law enforcement speak with a student's parent or guardian, search a student's person or possessions, or collect additional information about the student or situation outside the school community during the assessment.

STEP 5. ESTABLISH ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Teams need to establish clearly defined processes and procedures to guide their assessments. Note that any safety concerns should be immediately addressed before the procedures described below take place. When followed, the procedures should allow the Team to form an accurate picture of the student's thinking, behavior, and circumstances to inform the Team's assessment and identify appropriate interventions.

Maintain documentation to keep track of when reports come in; the information that is gathered; when, where, and how it was obtained; who was interviewed; the behaviors and circumstances of

the student of concern; and the intervention strategies taken. Documentation requirements, such as forms and templates, should be included in the plan to ensure standardization across cases.

Use a community systems approach. An effective approach for gathering information to assess a student of concern is **to identify the sources that may have information on the student's actions and circumstances.** This involves identifying the persons with whom the student has a relationship or frequently interacts and the organizations or platforms that may be familiar with the student's behaviors. Students exist in more than one system and they come in contact with people beyond their classmates and teachers at school. Gathering information from multiple sources ensures that Teams are identifying concerning behaviors, accurately assessing the student's risks and needs, and providing the appropriate interventions, supports, and resources.

Examine online social media pages, conduct interviews, review class assignments, and consider searching the student's locker or desk. Team members should also review **academic, disciplinary, law enforcement, and other formal records** that may be related to the student. When reviewing school records, be sure to determine whether the student has been the subject of previous reports to school officials, especially if the student has a history of engaging in other concerning or threatening behaviors. Also determine if the student received any intervention or supports and whether those were beneficial or successful. The Team may be able to draw on information from previous incidents and interventions to address the current situation for the student. This factor further emphasizes the importance of the Team's documentation to ensure the accuracy and availability of information regarding prior contacts the student of concern may have had with the Team.

Build rapport that can facilitate information-gathering efforts. By demonstrating that their goal is to support individuals who may be struggling, while ensuring that the student and the school are safe, Teams may be better able to build a positive relationship with a student of concern and the student's parents or guardians. When Teams have established this rapport, parents or guardians may be more likely to share their own concerns, and the student may be more forthcoming about frustrations, needs, goals, or plans.

Evaluate the student's concerning behaviors and communications in the context of their age and social and emotional development. Some students' behaviors might seem unusual or maladaptive, but may be normal for adolescent behavior or in the context of a mental or developmental disorder. To ensure that these students are being accurately assessed, collect information from diverse sources, including the reporting party, the student of concern, classmates, teammates, teachers, and friends. Consider whether those outside of their immediate circle, such as neighbors or community groups, may be in a position to share information regarding observed behaviors.

Investigative themes

Teams should organize their information gathering around several themes or areas pertaining to the student's actions, circumstances, and any other relevant threat assessment factors. Addressing each theme is necessary for a complete assessment and may uncover other avenues of inquiry to help determine whether the student is at risk for engaging in violence. Using the themes to identify where the student might be struggling will help the Team identify the most appropriate resources. Keep in mind, there is no need to wait until the Team has completed all interviews or addressed every theme before taking action. As soon as an area for intervention is identified, suitable management strategies should be enacted.

Motives

Students may have a variety of motives that place them at risk for engaging in harmful behavior, whether to themselves or others. If you can discover the student's motivation for engaging in the concerning behavior that brought him/her to the attention of the Team, then you can understand more about the student's goals. The Team should also assess how far the student may be willing to go to achieve these goals, and what or who may be a potential target. Understanding motive further allows the Team to develop management strategies that can direct the student away from violent choices.

Communications

Look for concerning, unusual, bizarre, threatening, or violent communications the student made. The student's communications may reveal grievances held about certain issues or a possible intended target. They may allude to violent intentions or warn others to stay away from school at a certain time. They may reveal information relevant to the other investigative themes by making reference to feelings of hopelessness or suicide, a fascination with violence, interest in weapons, or other inappropriate interests. These statements might be made in person to classmates, teammates, or friends; in writing on assignments or tests; and/or via social media, text messages, or photo or video-sharing sites. Earlier NTAC research that examined attacks on schools found that not every student directly threatened their target prior to attack, but in a majority of incidents (81%), another person was aware of what the student was thinking or planning. It is important for Teams to remember that a student who has not made threatening statements may still be at risk for engaging in violence. Whether or not the student made a direct threat should not be the lone indicator of concern.

Inappropriate interests

Gather information about whether the student has shown **an inappropriate or heightened interest in concerning topics such as school attacks or attackers, mass attacks, or other types of violence**. These interests might appear in the student's communications, the books the student reads, the movies the student watches, or the activities the student enjoys. The context of the student's interests is an important factor to consider. For example, a student's interest in weapons may not be concerning if the student is a hunter or is on the school's rifle team, with no evidence of an inappropriate or unhealthy fixation on weapons. In other situations, the context surrounding a student's interest in weapons could be of concern. For example, if a student is fixated on past school shooters or discusses what firearm would be best to use in a mass attack.

Weapons access

In addition to determining whether the student has any inappropriate interests or fascination with weapons, the Team should assess whether the student **has access to weapons**. Because many school attackers used firearms acquired from their homes, consider whether the family keeps weapons at home or if there is a relative or friend who has weapons. Sometimes parents who keep weapons at home incorrectly assume that their children are unaware of where they are stored or how to access them. If there are weapons at home, the Team should determine if they are stored appropriately and if the student knows how to use them or has done so in the past. The Team should also remember that firearms are not the only weapons to be concerned about. Even though many school attackers have used firearms in carrying out their attacks, explosives, incendiary devices, bladed weapons, or combinations of these weapons have been used in past attacks.

Stressors

All students face stressors such as **setbacks, losses, and other challenges** as part of their lives. While many students are resilient and can overcome these situations, for some, these stressors may become overwhelming and ultimately influence their decision to carry out an attack at school. Gather information on stressors the student is experiencing, how the student is coping with them, and whether there are supportive friends or family who can help the student overcome them. Assess whether the student experienced stressors in the past that are still having an effect, such as a move to a new school, and whether there might be additional setbacks or losses in the near future, like a relationship that might be ending. **Stressors can occur in all areas of a student's life**, including at school with coursework, friendships, romantic relationships, or teammates, or outside of school with parents, siblings, or at jobs. Many students can experience bullying, a stressor which can take place in person at school or online at home. Teams should intervene and prevent bullying and cyberbullying of a student who has been brought to their attention. More broadly, administrators should work to address any concerns regarding bullying school-wide and ensure their school has a safe climate for all students.

Emotional and developmental issues

Anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide, and other mental health issues are important factors to consider when conducting an assessment. Keep in mind that students with emotional issues or developmental disorders might behave in a way that is maladaptive but might not be concerning or threatening because the behavior is a product of their diagnosis. **Behaviors exhibited by a student with a diagnosed disorder need to be evaluated in the context of that diagnosis and the student's known baseline of behavior.** If the student is experiencing feelings related to a diagnosable mental illness, such as depression, then the Team needs to consider the effect of these feelings on their behaviors when assessing the student's risk of engaging in harm to self or others.

Desperation or despair

Assess whether the student feels **hopeless, desperate, or out of options.** Determine if the student has had thoughts about or engaged in behaviors that would indicate the student's desperation. The Team should determine whether the student has felt this way before, how the student managed those feelings then, and whether those same resources for coping are available to the student now. Consider whether the student has tried addressing the problems in a positive way, but was unable to resolve them, thereby leading to a sense of hopelessness about their situation.

Violence as an option

Some students, who are feeling hopeless and out of options, **may think violence is the only way to solve a problem or settle a grievance.** The Team should look to see whether the student thinks violence is acceptable or necessary, if the student has used violence in the past to address problems, and whether the student has thought of alternative ways to address the grievances. The Team should also assess whether peers, or others, support and encourage the student to use violence as a means to an end. If possible, connect the student with more positive, prosocial role models who discourage violence and identify more acceptable ways to solve problems.

Concerned others

In previous incidents, many students made statements or engaged in behaviors prior to their attacks that elicited concern from others in their lives. Assess whether parents, friends, classmates, teachers, or others who know the student are worried about the student and whether they have taken any actions in response to their concerns. Gather information on the specific behaviors that caused worry or fear. These could **include behaviors that may have elicited concerns about the safety of the student or others**, such as unusual, bizarre or threatening statements; intimidating

or aggressive acts; indications of planning for an attack; suicidal ideations or gestures; or a fixation on a specific target. **Other behaviors that elicit concern may not necessarily be indicative of violence**, but do require that the Team assess the behavior and provide appropriate supports. Examples of these behaviors include alcohol or drug use; behavior changes related to academic performance, social habits, mood, or physical appearance; conflicts with others; and withdrawal or isolation.

Capacity to carry out an attack

Determine whether the student's thinking and behavior is organized enough to plan and execute an attack and whether the student has the resources to carry it out. **Planning does not need to be elaborate** and could be as simple as taking a weapon from home and inflicting harm on classmates at school. Other student attackers may develop more complex and lengthier plans. At the very least, carrying out an attack requires that the student has access to a weapon and the ability to get that weapon to school undetected.

Planning

Targeted attacks at school are **rarely sudden or impulsive** acts of violence. The Team should assess whether the student has made specific plans to harm the school. The student might create lists of individuals or groups targeted for violence, or research tactics and materials needed to carry out the attack. The student may conduct surveillance, draw maps of the planned location, and test security responses at school. He/she may write out detailed steps and rehearse some aspects of a plan, such as getting to the school, the timing of the attack, or whether to attempt escape, be captured, or commit suicide. The student may also acquire, manufacture, or practice with a weapon.

Consistency

The Team should **corroborate the student's statements** to determine that they are consistent with the student's actions and behaviors and with what other people say about the student. When inconsistencies are identified, the Team should then try to determine why that is the case. For example, the student might say that he/she is handling a romantic break-up well, but posts on social media indicate the student is struggling to move on, and friends report that the student is more upset or angry about the break-up than reported. Determine whether the inconsistency is because the student is deliberately hiding something or if the inconsistency stems from another underlying issue. For example, a depressed student may claim that they are isolated, even if they regularly go out with a large group of students. If the inconsistency is deliberate, it is important to determine why the student feels the need to conceal their actions. The concealment may be as simple as a fear of facing punishment for some other inappropriate behavior, or it may be related to hidden plans for a violent act.

Protective factors

A thorough threat assessment requires understanding the full picture of a student's behaviors and environment, which also includes accounting for the positive and prosocial influences on the student's life. The Team should identify factors that may restore hope to a student who feels defeated, desperate, or in a situation that is impossible to overcome. This includes determining whether the student has a **positive, trusting relationship with an adult at school**. This could be a teacher, coach, guidance counselor, administrator, nurse, resource officer, or janitor. A trusted adult at school in whom the student can confide and who will listen without judgment can help direct a student toward resources, supports, and options to overcome setbacks. Learn who the student's friends are at school and if the student feels emotionally connected to other students. A student may need help developing friendships that they can rely on for support. Positive situational or personal factors might help to deter a student from engaging in negative or harmful behaviors.

Changes in a student's life, such as having a new romantic relationship or becoming a member of a team or club, might discourage any plan to engage in violence. The Team could also use activities or groups the student wants to take part in as motivation for the student to engage in positive and constructive behaviors, such as attending class, completing assignments, and adhering to a conduct or behavior code.

STEP 6. DEVELOP RISK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Once the Team has completed a thorough assessment of the student, it can **evaluate whether the student is at risk for self-harm or harming someone else** at school. Concern may be heightened if the student is struggling emotionally, having trouble overcoming setbacks or losses, feeling hopeless, preoccupied with others who engaged in violence to solve problems, or has access to weapons. Remember, the Team is not attempting to predict with certainty if violence will happen. Instead, evaluate the presence of factors that indicate violence might be a possibility. Teams can then **develop risk management strategies that reduce the student's risk for engaging in violence** and make positive outcomes for the student more likely.

Each student who comes to the Team's attention will require an **individualized management plan**. The resources and supports the student needs will differ depending on the information gathered during the assessment.

Often, the Team will determine that the student is not currently at risk for engaging in violence, but **requires monitoring or is in need of guidance** to cope with losses, develop resiliency to overcome setbacks, or learn more appropriate strategies to manage emotions.

Resources to assist the student could take the form of peer support programs or therapeutic counseling to enhance social learning or emotional competency, life skills classes, tutoring in specific academic subjects, or mental health care. Most programs and supports will be available within the school, but the Team may need to also access community resources to assist with managing the student.

Sometimes management involves suspension or expulsion from school. When this is necessary, Teams and school administrators should consider how it might affect their ability to monitor the student. **Removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk to the school community**. Several school attacks have been carried out by former students who had been removed from the school or aged out of their former school. A suspended or expelled student might become isolated from positive peer interactions or supportive adult relationships at school. Teams should develop strategies to stay connected to the suspended or expelled student to determine whether the student's situation is deteriorating, or the behaviors of concern are escalating so that they can respond appropriately. Management plans should remain in place until the Team is no longer concerned about the student or the risk for violence. This is accomplished by addressing the following basic elements that can reduce the likelihood a student will engage in violence and provide support and resources for those in need.

Notify law enforcement immediately if a student is thinking about or planning to engage in violence, so that they may assist in managing the situation.

Make efforts to address the safety of any potential targets by altering or improving security procedures for schools or individuals and providing guidance on how to avoid the student of concern.

Create a situation that is less prone to violence by asking the family or law enforcement to block the student's access to weapons, while also connecting the student to positive, prosocial models of behavior. Another option may involve removing the student from campus for a period of time, while maintaining a relationship with the student and the student's family.

Remove or redirect the student's motive. Every student's motive will be different, and motives can be redirected in a variety of ways. These strategies may include bullying prevention efforts or offering counseling for a student experiencing a personal setback.

Reduce the effect of stressors by providing resources and supports that help the student manage and overcome negative events, setbacks, and challenges.

STEP 7. CREATE AND PROMOTE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATES

A crucial component of preventing targeted violence at schools relies on developing positive school climates **built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and social and emotional support.**

Teachers and staff in safe school environments support diversity, encourage communication between faculty and students, intervene in conflicts, and work to prevent teasing and bullying. Students in safe school climates feel empowered to **share concerns with adults**, without feeling ashamed or facing the stigma of being labeled a "snitch." Administrators can take action to develop and sustain safe school climates.

Help students feel connected to the school, their classmates, and teachers. This is an important first step to creating school climates that are supportive, respectful, and safe. **Encourage teachers and staff to build positive, trusting relationships with students** by actively listening to students and taking an interest in what they say.

Break down "codes of silence" and help students feel empowered to come forward and share concerns and problems with a trusted adult. At one school, administrators used a faculty meeting to identify students who lacked a solid connection with an adult at school. They provided faculty with a roster of enrolled students and asked them to place a mark next to students with whom they had a warm relationship. For students without a mark next to their name, popular, well-liked teachers and staff were asked to reach out and develop positive connections with them.

Help students feel more **connected to their classmates and the school.** One teacher asked her elementary students to write down names of classmates they wanted to sit next to. If a student's name did not appear on anyone's list, the teacher placed that student's desk next to a friendly or outgoing classmate in an effort to help the student develop friendships. This effort could be easily adapted with middle or high school-aged students by asking students to identify one or two classmates they would like to be partnered with for a project and assigning any student not named on a list to be partnered with a friendly or outgoing classmate.

Adults can also help students **identify clubs or teams at school** they can join or encourage them to start their own special interest group.

Schools can also support positive school climates by implementing school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs. These programs actively teach students what appropriate behavior looks like in a variety of settings, including in the classroom, with their friends, or among adults. Teachers frequently praise prosocial behavior they observe and

encourage students' good behavior. PBIS can improve academic outcomes for schools and has been shown to reduce the rates of school bullying.

While teachers and staff can foster relationships and connectedness among the student body, **students themselves have a role to play** in sustaining safe school climates. They should be actively engaged in their schools, encouraged to reach out to classmates who might be lonely or isolated, and empowered to intervene safely when they witness gossiping, teasing, and bullying.

STEP 8. CONDUCT TRAINING FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The final component of a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan is to identify training needs for all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, and administrators; students; parents; and school resource officers or local law enforcement. **School safety is everyone's responsibility.** Anyone who could come forward with concerning information or who might be involved in the assessment process should be provided with training. Effective training addresses the goals and steps of an assessment, the type of information that should be brought forward, and how individuals can report their concerns. It might be beneficial for staff and students to hear presentations, see videos, and role-play scenarios so they have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and the steps they can take to keep their school safe. Each audience will require a slightly different message, but some stakeholders may also benefit from attending training together, such as parents and students, or school faculty/staff and law enforcement personnel. When developing a training program, consider how frequently each stakeholder will receive training, and whether to vary the delivery method of trainings. Also, each audience may have unique needs.

Faculty, staff, and administrators

Every adult at school needs training related to threat assessment and violence prevention, **including administrative, maintenance, custodial, and food service staff.** Training can include who should be notified when concerning or threatening information is discovered, what information should be brought forward, how school staff might learn about information, and the steps school staff can take to safely intervene with concerning or threatening situations. Providing training on other topics, such as suicide awareness and prevention, conflict resolution, mental health, and developmental disabilities, might also allow school faculty, staff, and administrators to foster positive school climates.

Students

Students need training on the threat assessment process, where to report concerns, and what information they should bring forward. Students also need assurances that they can make a report to the Team or another trusted adult **anonymously**, that their information will be **followed up on**, and will be kept **confidential**. Training can also educate students about other actionable steps they can take to cultivate a safe school climate, including ways they can safely intervene with bullying, gossip, or name-calling. Messaging should demonstrate to students that there is a big **difference between "snitching," "ratting," or "tattling," and seeking help.** While snitching is informing on someone for personal gain, here, students are encouraged to come forward when they are worried about a friend who is struggling, or when they are trying to keep someone from getting hurt. Remind students that if they are concerned about a classmate or friend, they need to keep speaking out until that person gets the help they need. Finally, maintaining a safe school climate includes providing students with training or lessons to acquire skills and abilities to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, cope with stress, seek help, and engage in positive social interactions.

Parents.

Parents should also be trained on the threat assessment process at their child’s school and their role in that process. They should be clear on who to call, when, and what information they should be ready to provide. Parents can also benefit from training that helps them recognize when children and teenagers may be in emotional trouble or feeling socially isolated. Training can also reduce the stigma around mental, emotional, or developmental issues and provide information on available resources and when they should seek professional assistance.

Law enforcement and school resource officers.

Not every school will have a school resource officer, but schools can still develop relationships with local law enforcement agencies and personnel. Schools can encourage local officers to co-teach classes at the school, serve as coaches or assistant coaches of sports teams, and work with parents and teachers at after-school events. In some communities without school resource officers, local law enforcement agencies have encouraged officers to “adopt a school,” stopping by the school to greet and become familiar with students and teachers, eating lunch on campus, or doing paperwork in an office at the school. Like parents and teachers, local law enforcement and school resource officers need to be aware of the school’s threat assessment process and their own responsibilities once a threat is identified. Training for law enforcement and school resource officers should also provide familiarity with emergency response procedures the school has in place and the layout of the campus. Officers and school staff might benefit from attending training together so that all parties are aware of the point at which local law enforcement should be involved in an investigation. This would also allow officers to get to know administrators, teachers, counselors, facilities and maintenance personnel, and other school staff. It is much easier to work through an emergency situation when schools and law enforcement are already familiar with each other and their procedures.

CONCLUSION

Despite having a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan in place, and despite a school and Team’s best efforts at prevention, incidents of targeted school violence may still occur. It is critical to develop and implement emergency response plans and procedures and provide training on them to all stakeholders. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends that emergency response plans be developed with input from local law enforcement and first responders.⁵ For example, procedures should be developed for reporting emergencies, evacuation procedures and routes, use of emergency notification systems, and information regarding local hospitals or trauma centers. Law enforcement and first responders should be apprised of these plans and procedures and know how to implement them.

Everyone has a role in preventing school violence and creating safe school climates. The threat assessment procedures detailed in this guide are an important component of school safety and security efforts and have been determined to be the best-practice in the prevention of targeted school violence. The model highlights that students can engage in a continuum of concerning behaviors and communications, the vast majority of which may not be threatening or violent. Nevertheless, it encourages schools to set a low threshold when identifying students who might be engaging in unusual behavior, or experiencing distress, so that early interventions can be applied to reduce the risk of violence or other negative outcomes.

Appendix E: Remote Instruction Plan

Fort Edward Union Free School District Emergency Remote Instruction Information

Availability of Devices and Internet Access

In order to facilitate the educational process in the event of an emergency situation that would require remote instruction for students, the school district completes the annual Student Digital Resources collection process to better inform how this plan can serve the school community. The purpose of this survey is so that the school district can understand the level of access to technology that students within the school district have, primarily in regard to their access to the internet and computers.

To support remote learning, the district will make computer devices and hotspot devices available to the greatest extent possible. Currently, the school district has 1:1 Chromebook capacity for grades 6-12 and banks of Chromebooks in K-5 classrooms. Should the school district anticipate a remote instruction day, those Chromebooks could be distributed within the classroom, but in the event that was not possible, administrators and administrative assistants would be responsible for aiding in the dispersal process.

In the event that students do not have access to an internet connection, the school district shall work with community partners to help ensure that public access wi-fi points are available for students and families throughout the community to allow for them to participate in remote learning. To the extent possible, the district shall try to maintain the use of a single online learning platform.

The school district's technology department shall be responsible for assisting students with internet access, including, but not limited to, the use of hotspot devices, and may also be tasked with servicing devices that may not be working properly. This group may also be responsible for providing on-site instructional support for technology integration and for providing learning opportunities through tutorial videos and other virtual means.

Should the school district determine in advance that emergency conditions may require the school district to provide remote instruction during the following day(s), students and staff shall be informed of this possibility via their existing internal and external communication channels with as much advance notice as possible. The school district may communicate this information via the public address system, verbal communication, letters sent home, social media posts, phone calls, and via text messages.

Inevitably, there may be students in the school community for whom remote learning is not appropriate or possible. In these situations, the school district shall assess that individual's unique needs and try to accommodate them with in-person learning, to the extent that is possible. The school district may also consider utilizing 1:1 aides, instruction by phone, or the creation and dissemination of paper materials to the students home, as well as other methods, to better support their individual needs.

Provision of Special Education and Related Services

Should remote learning become necessary, the school district shall ensure that special education services are provided to students who need them, in accordance with their individualized education programs (IEPs) and to ensure that they receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). In order to facilitate the provision of special education and related services the school district shall ensure that:

- Teachers shall be available to provide on-going support and to deliver IEP services.
- Students are provided with prioritized standards-based lessons via Google Meet
- Students are directly provided with modifications and accommodations as per their IEP
- All differentiated assignments shall be compliant with NYS guidelines and the student's IEP
- Accommodations shall be provided through the student's 504 plans
- Special Education teachers shall attend professional learning communities, grade level meetings, and department meetings to discuss continuity of instruction, struggling students, and learning activities
- Students are provided with daily synchronous instruction via Google Meet

Expectations for Time Spent in Modalities and Foundation Aid

In the event that the school district were required to go to emergency remote instruction, the school district schedule shall mirror what the in-person schedule for the day would have been. Students shall be provided with opportunities throughout the course of the day to interact with teachers and their peers during live instruction, including group work and question and answer sessions within the classroom structure.

For state aid purposes, the school district estimates that they will spend six hours of time in remote instruction due to emergency conditions.

Appendix F: Special Patrol Officer Contract

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FORT EDWARD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE COUNTY OF WASHINGTON FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL PATROL OFFICER SERVICES

This Agreement is made this 21 day of May, 2025, by and between the FORT EDWARD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT ("District") and the COUNTY OF WASHINGTON, NEW YORK ("County") (collectively referred to as "the Parties," and individually referred to as "Party").

WHEREAS, the District is desirous of retaining the services of a part-time special patrol officer ("SPO") in an effort to enhance the security of District students, staff, visitors and property, to deter criminal behavior and otherwise benefit the student population through positive interactions between students during school hours, and to otherwise perform duties traditionally associated with a school resource officer to the extent permitted by law; and

WHEREAS, the County is desirous of providing such services to the District, in order to benefit the District's student population as well as the community at large; and

WHEREAS, the Parties have considered and discussed the terms upon which this program will be implemented, and have agreed upon the terms set forth herein for that purpose;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and covenants herein contained, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

1. **Term.** The term of this Agreement shall commence on July 1st, 2025 (the "Effective Date") and end on June 30th 2026 ("Termination Date").
2. **Termination.** This Agreement may be terminated with or without cause at any time by either Party, in its sole discretion, upon a ninety (90) day written notice to the other Party, or earlier terminated pursuant to the provisions of Section 11(1) herein.
3. **Compensation and Costs.** The County, as more fully set forth below, shall appoint and employ a uniformed and equipped special patrol officer pursuant to N.Y. General Municipal Law Section 209-v ("Section 209-v"). The Parties affirm that the intent of this Agreement is to have the SPO perform duties which include those traditionally associated with a school resource officer, to the extent permitted by law including Section 209-v, and as specified in Section 5 herein.
 - 3.1 The Parties agree that the District shall pay the County the total sum of \$49,909 in eight (8) equal monthly installments in the amount of \$4,990.90 beginning October 15th 2025 and continuing the 15th day of each month thereafter through July 15th 2026. In consideration of such payment, the County shall make available to the District a total of 1,480 hours of service to be provided by the SPO as more fully described in Section 5 herein. The County shall be responsible for paying all salary, benefits, training, insurance, taxes, equipment, and other costs associated with the SPO. The County acknowledges and agrees that the SPO is not eligible to participate in any District pension or fringe benefit program, such as vacation pay, sick pay, or health insurance that is provided to District employees. The County will provide the District with the number of hours worked by the SPO each month. In June, the District will either be credited at a rate of \$31.86 for each hour under the 1,480 hours that was not worked by the SPO or compensate the County at a rate of \$31.86 for each hour over the 1,480 hours that was worked by the SPO.

Hours spent by the SPO attending required training shall be deducted from the 1,480 hours of service available to the District. Similarly, if the District determines that the SPO shall no longer be allowed to work at the District, the District will be credited at the rate of \$31.86 for each hour under the 1,480 hours that was not worked by the SPO. In the event of a change in the County's cost for provision of SRO services, the Parties agree to meet and negotiate the impact of those changes.

- 3.2 In the event the SPO is sick or unable to perform the SPO duties, the County will **attempt** to fill the vacant SPO position with another SPO that is agreeable to the District.

4. **The Duties of the County.** The County shall appoint on a part-time basis and assign one SPO to the District as follows:

- 4.1 The SPO shall be assigned to the District and shall be expected to work a regular schedule of 40 hours each week from 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. each day, during the District's regular school days/weeks. However, the SPO's working days and hours may be adjusted to attend special events or details by mutual agreement between the SPO and the District's Superintendent of Schools upon submission of a written change request to the Sheriff's Office.
- 4.2 The SPO may leave school grounds during scheduled working hours to attend required training or to perform duties that arise in the course of the SPO's services under this Agreement. The SPO shall provide notice to the Superintendent of Schools (or his designee) and Sheriff's Office as soon as practicable, and in advance, if possible, of any such obligations.
- 4.2(a) School grounds shall include any grounds and associated buildings on the school campus and District.
- 4.3 The SPO, may by mutual agreement between the SPO, Sheriff's Office and the District's Superintendent of Schools, work beyond the standard workday and week, to attend special events, and they shall then be permitted to flex their time to account for such additional hours upon notice to and approval of the Superintendent and Sheriff's Office. If flexing time is not an option, then any additional hours will be compensated either at the SPO's regular rate of pay (\$30.79) or Overtime rate of pay if applicable (\$46.19).
- 4.4 The County shall provide the SPO with appropriate uniforms, equipment, badges, and firearm.
- 4.4(a) The County shall provide the SPO with the required yearly firearms/Article 35 training and qualification.

5. **The Duties of the SPO.** The SPO shall perform the following duties under this Agreement, as directed by the District and Sheriff's Office, to the extent permitted by law including Section 209-v:

- 5.1 The SPO shall undertake appropriate efforts to ensure the safety and security of District property and persons on such property. The SPO will patrol school buildings and grounds and respond to emergency situations on the District's property.

- 5.2 The SPO shall act as a school resource officer and provide a positive role model for students.
- 5.3 The SPO shall act as an instructor for specialized, short-term, programs at the District, when invited to do so by the principal or a member of the faculty (ie. Internet safety, conflict resolution, violence prevention etc.). All such presentations will be approved by both the District and Sheriff's Office.
- 5.4 The SPO shall make presentations to the District faculty and students on law-related topics. Such subjects shall include a basic presentation on laws, the role of police officers, and the police mission. All such presentations will be approved by both the District and Sheriff's Office.
- 5.5 The SPO shall coordinate his or her activities with the Superintendent of Schools and staff members as identified by the Superintendent, and will seek permission, advice and guidance prior to undertaking any program in the District.
- 5.6 The SPO shall promote a trusting relationship by developing lines of communication with students and staff and promote positive behavior and interaction between students.
- 5.7 The SPO shall make themselves available for conferences with students, parents and faculty members in order to assist them with law enforcement or crime prevention matters.
- 5.8 The SPO shall refer students who may be experiencing a variety of school, family or social problems to the District for appropriate action.
- 5.9 The SPO shall become familiar with all community agencies that offer assistance to youths and their families, such as mental health clinics, drug treatment centers, etc. but any referrals thereto will be made by the District.
- 5.10 The SPO shall assist the District in developing plans and strategies to prevent and/or minimize dangerous situations which may occur in school or during school sponsored events. The SPO shall assist in increasing staff awareness about policies and procedures for preventing/responding to incidents of violence and other threats to school safety.
- 5.11 The SPO shall take law enforcement action as immediately required to the extent that a special patrol officer may do so under the authority of law. As soon as practicable, the SPO shall make the Superintendent of Schools (or his designee) aware of such action. At the Superintendent's (or his designee's) request, the SPO shall take appropriate law enforcement action against intruders and unwanted guests who may appear at the school and related school functions, to the extent that the SPO may do so under the authority of the law.
 - 5.11(a) Once the SPO has taken whatever immediate action was necessary to resolve the situation the SPO shall notify and turn the case and investigation over to a Deputy Sheriff or appropriate Police Officer for any further action.
- 5.12 The SPO will assist other police officers and law enforcement representatives in

matters regarding this Agreement, whenever necessary.

- 5.13 The SPO shall maintain detailed and accurate records of the operation of the SPO Program and shall make them available to the Superintendent of Schools as required by law, or upon request.
- 5.14 The SPO shall not act as a school disciplinarian. However, if the Superintendent believes an incident involves a violation of the law, then the Superintendent may contact the SPO and the SPO shall then determine whether law enforcement action is appropriate and notify a Deputy or Police Officer for any further action. The SPO is not to be used as a substitute for regularly assigned lunchroom duties, hall monitoring, bus duties or other monitoring duties, but will maintain a highly visible presence through the school day in hallways, lobby, cafeteria, restrooms, and parking lot to protect persons and property, to maintain order, and to assure compliance with safety and security rules and protocol.

6. Duties of the District.

- 6.1 The District shall provide to the SPO the following materials and facilities, which are deemed necessary for the performance of the SPO's duties:
 - 6.1.1 Access to a properly lighted office area, which shall contain a telephone, and which may be used for general business purposes;
 - 6.1.2 A location for official files and records which can be locked and secured;
 - 6.1.3 A desk with drawers, a chair, worktable, filing cabinet and office supplies;
 - 6.1.4 Access to a computer with e-mail and internet capability;
 - 6.1.5 A written letter authorizing the SPO to carry a firearm on school property in compliance with PL 265.01(a).
 - 6.1.6 Provide TCI training, if required by the District.

7. **Independent Contractor.** The relationship between the District and the County is that of an independent contractor. The SPO shall be an employee of the County and shall have no employment relationship with the District.

8. **Federal, State, and Local Taxes.** Consistent with its status as an independent contractor, the County agrees that it, and not the District, shall be responsible, where appropriate, for: (1) Withholding FICA (Social Security and Medicare) taxes from the SPO's compensation or making FICA payments on the SPO's behalf; (2) Making federal or state unemployment insurance contributions on the SPO's behalf; (3) Withholding federal, state, or local income tax from the SPO's compensation. The County represents, warrants, and agrees that it will timely pay all federal, state, and local income taxes, FICA taxes, federal and state unemployment insurance contributions which arise in connection with the SPO's provision of services under this Agreement.

9. **Workers' Compensation.** The County acknowledges that the SPO will not be entitled to workers' compensation or disability insurance coverage under the District's policies. The County will cover the SPO with workers' compensation and any other similar insurance required by law. The

County will provide the District with proof of such coverage upon request, before the SPO begins performing services under this Agreement. To the extent a claim is asserted against the District by the SPO, the County shall defend and indemnify the District for any judgments or claims entered against the District under the Workers' Compensation Law.

10. **Unemployment Insurance.** The County acknowledges that the SPO will not be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits from the District. The County agrees that it will make any federal or state unemployment insurance contributions on behalf of the SPO. The County will also be responsible for the reimbursement of any unemployment insurance benefits that may be paid to the SPO. To the extent the SPO asserts an unemployment insurance claim against the District, the County shall defend the District and shall indemnify the District for any resulting judgment or liability under the Unemployment Insurance Law.

11. **Appointment of the SPO.** The SPO must possess relevant job knowledge, experience, training, education, and have the appropriate appearance, attitude, communications skills and bearing. The SPO must be legally eligible to be appointed and to serve as a special patrol officer. The County shall solicit candidates for appointment to SPO, and shall conduct the process of interviewing and screening candidates. The District shall have the right to have a representative present during the interview, screening and selection process, and may participate in the hiring decision with the Sheriff's Office. The District shall have the right to reject an individual recommended by the County. The implementation of this Agreement is specifically contingent upon the Washington County Department of Personnel, or any other applicable civil service entity with jurisdiction, approving the appointment of the SPO pursuant to Section 209-v.

1. **Termination and Replacement of the SPO.** In the event that either the County or the District believes that the SPO is not effectively performing his duties and responsibilities, it shall promptly notify the other, and may immediately preclude the SPO from working at the District or being on District property. The Parties shall then confer to determine whether to (a) terminate the assignment of the SPO and assign another individual to serve as SPO, or (b) terminate this Agreement. If the Parties are unable to reach agreement under this section, then this Agreement shall be terminated.

2. **Good Faith.** The District, the County, and their respective agents and employees, agree to cooperate in good faith in fulfilling the terms of this Agreement. Unforeseen difficulties or questions will be resolved by negotiation between the Parties.

3. **Modification.** This document constitutes the full understanding of the Parties and no terms, conditions, understandings, or agreement purporting to modify or vary the terms of this document shall be binding unless upon mutual written agreement by the Parties.

4. **Severability.** In the event any provision of this Agreement shall be or become invalid under any provision of federal, state or local law, such invalidity shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision hereof.

5. **Hold Harmless.** The County agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the District, its officers, Board of Education members, employees, agents, contractors and representatives, from any and all liability, damages, fines, or judgments, (including those based on negligence) which may arise as a result of the County's acts and omissions in the performance of this Agreement or violation or breach of any promise, representation, or the law. The District agrees to indemnify

and hold harmless the County, its officers, County Board members, employees, agents, contractors and representatives, from any and all liability, damages, fines, or judgments, (including those based on negligence) which may arise as a result of the District's acts and omissions in the performance of this Agreement or violation or breach of any promise, representation, or the law.

6. **Entire Agreement.** This constitutes the entire agreement of the Parties hereto and all previous communications between the Parties, whether written or oral, with reference to the matter of this Agreement, are hereby superseded.

7. **Compliance with Laws.** The services to be provided by the SPO pursuant to this Agreement shall be in all respects consistent with applicable law, and the terms of this Agreement shall be interpreted and applied consistent with applicable law. By their signatures below, the County Supervisor and Superintendent of Schools represent and certify that this Agreement has been approved by resolution of the County Board and the Board of Education, respectively.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement as of the Effective Date set above.

For the County of Washington:

For the Fort Edward Union Free School District:

Chairman of the Board

Superintendent of Schools

Sheriff Jeffrey J. Murphy

APPROVED AS TO FORM
DSM
WASHINGTON COUNTY
ATTORNEY

Appendix G: Continuation of Operations During Public Health Emergencies

**Public Employer Health Emergency Plan
for the Fort Edward Union Free School
District**

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832.

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

This plan has been developed with the input of the Fort Edward Teachers’ Association, Fort Edward Support Staff Association, and the Fort Edward Administrators’ Association, as required by the amended New York State Labor Law.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the rights and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

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As the authorized official of the Fort Edward Union Free School District, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public

Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to the Fort Edward Union Free School District. This plan is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations.
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety
- The public and our constituency expects us to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

Concept of Operations

The Superintendent of Schools of the Fort Edward Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Fort Edward Union Free School District may be notified by phone, email, or any other means determined to be necessary, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Parents, students, and other community members will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email notifications, social media messaging, and local news outlets, amongst others. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Principal and Superintendent will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of Schools of the Fort Edward Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor’s office, directing the implementation of changes as necessary. Updates of this plan will be published on the District Website and posted conspicuously in all school buildings.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Schools of the Fort Edward Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, the Fort Edward Union Free School District is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of employees, contractors, and our constituency
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations
5. Uphold the core values of the Fort Edward Union Free School District

The Fort Edward Union Free School District has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of a one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

The mission essential functions for the Fort Edward Union Free School District have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	Provides hardware and software for staff and students to facilitate continued education in remote learning environments necessary for continuity of instruction and education. Also responsible for troubleshooting technical issues that may arise during the distance learning process, the offering of best practices in communication to ensure that students are able to access curricular materials, and for helping staff members disseminate information related to both academic and social-emotional education.
Buildings and Grounds	Continues to upkeep the campus during remote work and learning and ensures that all buildings and grounds are properly maintained, regularly cleaned, and disinfected as necessary to ensure the safety of school community members.

District Office	Oversight and management of the functions performed by employees in the superintendent's office, and the business office, to ensure that regular business operations and services continue as necessary and/or mandated.
Health Office/Health Services	Upon consultation with the district physician and the County Department of Health, health office staff may be responsible for assessing ill staff and students, providing consultation to the district office, following up with healthcare providers, and providing assistance with contact tracing efforts as necessary.
School Building Main Office Staff	Oversight of mail, phones, sign-in procedures, and building utilization and operations.
Food Service	To ensure that food can be provided to students
Transportation	To ensure that meals may be delivered to students
Building Administrator	Supports the instructional efforts of the school district and provides leadership to the school community.

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSWHE BOCES IT Staff 	Responsible for overseeing the local area network and the subsequent ongoing maintenance of this network for the district. Oversees the district's internet access, and phone systems.
		Responsible for providing support to teachers and students in regards to computer hardware and software. Will respond to "help desk" and troubleshooting concerns.
Buildings and Grounds	Head of BGT	Responsible for overseeing and providing direction to the B&G department and employees to ensure a safe working environment.
	Cleaners and Maintenance Workers	Responsible for routine cleaning, disinfecting, and maintenance tasks. Responsible for performing a wide variety of tasks related to the maintenance and upkeep of campus grounds, parking lots, and fields.
District Office	Superintendent of Schools	Responsible for making day-to-day decisions about educational programs, budget/spending, staff, and facilities
	Principal	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent in the administration of educational programming and the development of goals to foster school improvement
	Business Manager Deputy Treasurer	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent in the administration of business affairs in such a way to provide the best services with the financial resources available
Health Office/Health	School Nurse	Assists building and district administrators by

Services		communicating with the local health department for guidance, may act as the liaison to the school physician, and is responsible for assisting other nurses in assessing ill students and staff
		Responsible for assessing ill students and staff and assisting in contact tracing efforts
School Building Main Office Staff	School Secretary	Responsible for answering phones, providing support to building administrators, responding to emails, greeting visitors, assisting in building sign-in procedures, accepting deliveries, and helping disseminate mail.
Food Service	Food Service Manager	Responsible for overseeing the preparation of meals and coordinating with the Transportation Director to ensure that meals are disseminated.
	Head Cook Cafeteria Aides	Responsible for the preparation of and making of meals for students.
Transportation	Head of BGT Transportation Coordinator	Responsible for the safety and efficient operation and maintenance of the transportation department. Coordinates with the Food Service Manager on meal deliveries.
Building Administrators	Building Principal	Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the school community and supporting the academic success of students, promoting a positive school climate, and assisting educators.

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites and on public transportation

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so at the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
 - a. Internet capable laptop
 - b. Necessary peripherals
 - c. Access to VPN and/or secure network drives
 - d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties
 - e. A solution for telephone communications
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

Approval and Assignment of Remote Work

The Superintendent or their designee, in consultation with the Head of BGT and Building Principal and others as needed, will review requests for remote work and corresponding work assignments to aid in the decision making process. Final decisions will be communicated to the Building Principal and Head of BGT

for dissemination to their respective staff. The Superintendent will notify payroll of such decisions to ensure employee time and attendance is tracked accurately.

Equipping Staff and Students for Remote Learning

The school district shall work with their WSWHE BOCES IT Staff to support non-essential employees and students during an extended school closure. In order to support this, students K-12 and instructional faculty and staff shall be provided with Chromebooks/laptops/iPads as possible to ease the transition to remote learning/working. Non-instructional staff who work remotely will have access to Chromebooks/laptops based on their individual needs for them to effectively perform their job duties remotely. In addition, the WSWHE BOCES IT Staff has established protocols for the repair of Chromebooks/laptops/iPads, as well as protocols for assisting in the procurement of internet access at an individual's home, if they do not have internet. The WSWHE BOCES IT Staff will also be responsible for assisting individuals in the procurement of VPN or other secure network drives as is deemed necessary and for providing access to software and databases that are deemed necessary for somebody to perform their duty.

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, the Fort Edward Union Free School District will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours

Identification of Positions with Staggered Work Hours and Approval Process

District buildings and grounds staff may be assigned to staggered shifts to ensure coverage before, during, and after core business hours. Nurses and other building positions may also be realigned to ensure greater coverage during the day and to line up with the needs of our population.

The approval and assignment of changed work hours must be reviewed by the Superintendent, Building Principal and Head of BGT. Factors such as staffing levels, the ability to provide physical distancing, and ways to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness will be considered in the decision making process.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE which may be needed can include:

- Masks
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. The Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated that supply chains were not able to keep up with increased demand for these products early in the pandemic. As such, we are including these supplies in this section as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location

2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months
 - b. Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
 - a. PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation
 - b. Employees and contractors must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates

Identification of Personal Protective Equipment Based on Job Duties

Each building shall be provided with a supply of disposable masks and hand sanitizer for use by students, employees, contractors, and/or visitors, as necessary. *The Head of BGT* shall be responsible for monitoring and replenishing those supplies as necessary. Individuals with a medical necessity and an approved reasonable accommodation will be provided N-95 respirators as necessary.

Given the nature of their work, buildings and grounds staff and health office staff will be supplied daily access to disposable masks, disposable gloves, face shields, and gowns as necessary. Individuals who have a job position that requires the wearing of an N-95 respirator shall be entered into a respiratory protection program, fit tested, medically cleared, and provided N-95 respirators as required.

Procurement of Personal Protective Equipment

The Head of BGT shall track PPE inventory in their building in the form of an inventory report that will be submitted to the *Deputy Treasurer/Superintendent* for review each week. When inventory gets low (i.e., having less than two pieces of PPE for each essential employee for at least a six-month period), *the Head of BGT* shall notify the *Deputy Treasurer* who will contact one or more of the vendors on the District-approved supplier's list to procure the necessary PPE. The district maintains a supplier list with backup suppliers listed in an effort to mitigate any supply chain disruption. For unforeseen disruptions or shortages, the district shall work with the Washington County Department of Health for assistance. Personal protective equipment shall be stored within the buildings where they can be tracked and accessed in the event of an emergency, and maintained in a way that prevents degradation.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. When/If a staff member is exposed, we will follow applicable Washington County Department of Health, New York State Department of Health, and CDC guidelines as is required and best practices. We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. We will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.

- a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected according to a preset schedule that emphasizes their cleaning and disinfection.
 - b. Buildings and grounds staff, with possible assistance from others, will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting common areas, based on the requirements of each individual situation and influenced by factors such as frequency of use, the specifics of the communicable disease, and recommendations from local, state, and federal authorities.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
 3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned prior to being disinfected.
 4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
 5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work, off-site visits. This information may be used by the Fort Edward Union Free School District to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Employees who are working at the Fort Edward School Building will document work days/hours and location through the use of the regular card scanning software and paper time sheets.

Employees who are working remotely will document work days/hours through the use of an online time sheet.

Both the online and traditional time sheets will only be accessible to the business office personnel, Head of BGT, Building Principal, and Superintendent.

Housing for Essential Employees

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of the Fort Edward Union Free School District's essential operations. If such a need arises, the school district shall work with local and state authorities to help identify and arrange for housing needs.

Amendment to the Adopted 2025 – 2026 District Wide School Safety Plan

Desha’s Law

On July 24, 2025, Governor Hochul signed Desha’s Law (S.5539A/A.785A), which takes effect on September 1, 2025. This law mandates that school safety plans include a comprehensive cardiac emergency response plan. The plan must outline procedures and designate appropriate personnel to respond to sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies occurring on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.

In addition to Desha’s Law, the use of on-site Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) is required under the New York State Education Department Commissioner’s Regulation CRR 136.4. In compliance, the district has adopted an AED Policy (Policy 5682) and implemented an AED Program that is available on our district website.

Heart attacks and sudden cardiac arrest are two different conditions. A heart attack is a circulation problem that occurs when blood flow to the heart is reduced or blocked. Sudden cardiac arrest is an electrical problem that occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating and the heart can’t pump blood to the brain, lungs and other organs. Cardiac arrest causes a person to lose consciousness and pulse.

The AED Program has been developed to ensure a prompt, efficient, and effective response to sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies in a school setting and outlines the emergency procedures to improve survival outcomes through early recognition and rapid response.

A designated group of school staff will be trained in CPR and AED use, and AEDs shall be clearly marked, accessible, and maintained with guidelines set by the American Heart Association. The district will also incorporate the AED Program protocols for responding to sudden cardiac arrest into the 2025–2026 Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.