



*New York State
Project S.A.V.E.
District-wide Safety Plan
For
Fort Edward Union Free School District
2020-2021*

Introduction

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

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

Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines

A. Purpose

The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** district-wide school safety plan was initially developed in 2001, pursuant to the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. At the direction of the **Fort Edward Union Free School District** Board of Education, the Superintendent of the **Fort Edward Union Free School District** appointed a district-wide school safety team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the district-wide school safety plan.

B. Identification of Chief Emergency Officer

The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** designates the **School Superintendent** as the district's **Chief Emergency Officer** whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Coordination of the 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 by September 1st, of the district-wide school safety plan and the coordination of the district-wide plan with the building-level emergency response plan;
- c. Ensure staff understanding of the district-wide school safety plan;
- d. Ensure the completion and yearly update by September 1st, of building-level emergency response plans for each school building;
- e. Assist in the selection of security related technology and development of policies for the use of such technology;
- f. Coordinate appropriate safety, security, and emergency training for district and school staff, including required training in the emergency response plan yearly by September 15th; and
- g. Ensure the conduct of required evacuation and lock-down drills in all district buildings as required by Education Law section 807. The Chief Emergency Officer can be reached during the day at the Superintendent's Office and after hours (for emergency only) by contacting the local 9-1-1 center who will contact him.

C. Identification of School Teams

The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** has created a District-Wide School Safety Team appointed by the board of education consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the school board, teachers, administrators, parent organizations, school safety personnel, and other school personnel. The members of the team by title are as follows:

- Superintendent
- Building Principals
- School Nurse
- Bus Driver
- Teacher
- Support Staff
- Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds
- Board of Education Member
- Parent

D. Concept of Operations

The District-Wide School Safety Plan (DWSSP) is directly linked to the individual building-level emergency response plan to the school. The activation of the Building-level Emergency Response Plan triggers the notification of the chain of command and the assessment of the activation of the District-wide Emergency School Safety Plan and District-wide Response Team.

The District-wide School Safety Plan was developed through extensive analysis of the local environment, emergency potential, and available resources. Through training and workshops that included school employees, administration, and local emergency services, the plan has been developed to address the specific needs of the Fort Edward Union Free School District and the community.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the School Emergency Response Team. The Building Principal is responsible for notifying the Superintendent or the highest-ranking person in the chain of command of any necessary Building-level plan activation. This notification shall be accomplished through the use of telephone or the district's radio network.

Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials shall also be notified.

County and state resources supplement the school districts emergency action planning in a number of ways:

- State and local law enforcement provide building reviews and employee training.
- Local law enforcement and emergency services participate in planning and training exercises and develop strategies for managing building-level emergencies.
- A protocol exists for the school district to use certain facilities for sheltering during times of emergencies.
- A protocol exists for the use of county mental health resources during post-incident response.

E. Plan review and public comment

- This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the **Fort Edward Union Free School District** district-wide school safety team and reviewed on an annual basis on or before September 1st of each year. A copy of the plan is available in the Superintendent's office.
- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 (e)(3), this plan was made available for public comment 30 days prior to its initial adoption, which was in 2001. The original district-wide school safety plan was adopted by the School Board in 2001 after the required public hearing that provided for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and other interested parties. This update is for School Year **2020-2021** and aligns with the new regulations. There will also be a public comment period for this most recent update.
- While linked to the district-wide school safety plan, the building-level emergency response plan **shall be confidential** and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a. The building-level emergency response plan shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed except to authorized department staff and law enforcement officers.
- Full copies of the district-wide school safety plan and any amendments are submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption by posting this public plan on the district's website. The building-level emergency response plan is supplied to the local law enforcement agencies, Washington County Sheriff and NYS State Police within 30 days of adoption.

Section II: General Emergency Response Planning

The District-Wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for the Building Level Emergency Response Plan. The purpose of a uniform plan is to ensure district-wide continuity for emergency responses. These general emergency responses are used to assist school employees, students, parents and emergency responders learn one system that can be used in the **Fort Edward Union Free School**

District. Specific responses to emergencies are in the Building Level Emergency Response Plan.

A. Identification of sites of potential emergency, including:

- The district-wide school safety team, in conjunction with local officials, has identified areas outside of school property that may impact a district facility during an emergency. Factors that were considered included population, presence of hazardous materials, and potential for emergency based on national trends and proximity to district property.
- A list of areas has been identified as having the potential to impact within the district. This list has been created for reference and awareness. The list is not all-inclusive for every emergency. However, these areas have been identified as having the most probable impact on district facilities or district boundaries should they have or create an emergency. A list of potential community-based hazards or emergency situations has been noted in the building-level emergency response plan
- The district- wide school safety team has recognized that there are many factors that could cause an emergency within our school building. There are also factors that need to be considered when responding to an emergency. A list of potential internal and external hazards or emergency situations has been noted in the building-level emergency response plan

B. The district has developed multi-hazard response guides. These guidelines are located in the building-level emergency response plan and are in ICS (Incident Command System) format. Plans for taking the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate are, including but not limited to:

- Initial Actions
- Command Post Location (primary and secondary)
- **Shelter in Place:** Used to shelter students/staff inside the school
 - Severe Weather
 - Bomb Threat
 - HazMat Incident
- **Hold-In Place:** Limits student/staff movement while dealing with short term emergencies
- **Evacuation:** Used to evacuate students/staff from the school (Formerly Fire Drills)
 - Before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes
 - Evacuation/Relocation Sites (internal and external)
- **Lockout:** Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school
- **Lockdown:** Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.
- **School Cancellation**
- **Early Dismissal**

Emergencies covered include, but are not limited to:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Air Pollution | Epidemic | Medical Emergency |
| Anthrax/Biological | Explosion | Natural Gas Leak |
| Bldg. Structural Failure | Fire Alarm Activation | Radiological |
| Bomb Threat | Flood | Rook Leak/Failure |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Civil Disturbance | Heating System Failure | School Bus Accident |
| Crimes Against People | Hostage Situation | Severe Weather Emergency |
| Earthquake | Intruder Situation | Threats of Violence |
| Elec. System Failure | Loss of Building | Water Emergency |
| Energy Supply Loss | Loss of Buses | Mass Casualty |

- C. The district has identified various district resources that may be available for use during an emergency, including the identification of personnel, equipment and shelters.
- D. Using the ICS (Incident Command System) the district has identified the school officials authorized to make decisions during an emergency. Through ICS, the procedures to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies are clearly defined. ICS also identifies the staff members and their backups assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.
- E. The district has policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students, including the strategies for implementing training related to multi-hazards. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, all staff will undergo annual training by September 15, 2019 and each subsequent September 15 thereafter on the building-level emergency response plan which includes components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year receive this training within 30 days of hire or as part of the district’s existing new hire training program, whichever is sooner. The district certifies that this training is completed during the October NYSED BEDS data collection.

The following procedures have been established to provide the multi-hazard school safety training on an annual basis to include but not limited to: Staff development days, early dismissal/go home drill, shelter-in place, hold-in-place, evacuation/fire drills, lockout, lockdown, table top exercises, and Incident Command System training.

- F. The district conducts drills and other training exercises to test components of the emergency response plan, including the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with local, county, and state emergency responders and preparedness officials. A debriefing concludes each test to determine if changes to the plan are necessary.

Emergency Response Drills. The school district, at least once every school year, and where possible in cooperation with local county emergency preparedness plan officials, conducts one test of its emergency response procedures under its Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, including sheltering, lock-down, or early dismissal (at a time not to occur more than 15 minutes earlier than the normal dismissal time).

Education Law §§ 807(1-a), 807 (b): Fire and Emergency Drills

The July 2016 amendments expanded fire drill requirements to also include emergency drills to prepare students to be able to respond appropriately in the event of a sudden emergency. The statute now requires twelve drills be conducted each school year, four of which must be lock-down drills, the remaining eight are required to be evacuation drills. There is still a requirement that eight of the required twelve drills must be completed in the first half of the school year. However, the date of completion has been changed from December 1 to December 31 of each

school year.

The statute now explicitly requires schools to conduct lock-down drills, which are essential, because they prepare students and staff to respond to the highest level of threat with the most urgent action and the least margin for error. The goal is to have schools conduct drills where they immediately clear hallways, lock doors and take positions out of sight to practice their ability to put the building into a protective posture as quickly as possible. These emergency measures allow time for responding law enforcement to arrive on scene and neutralize the threat. If possible, law enforcement should be involved in the drills to help prepare students and staff for their interactions and release from lock-down by uniformed officers. However, law enforcement involvement is not required by the new legislative mandate. Other protective actions such as lock-out or shelter in place are emergency actions that are usually preceded by some degree of warning time and do not require the immediate response necessary for a lock-down. While the school should be well versed in their lock-out and shelter in place protocols, lock-down is the only type of protective action that is specifically required by the statute.

Section III: Responding to Threats and Acts of Violence

A. The school refers to the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan for responding to threats and acts of violence (to include suicide). These are reviewed by the district-wide school safety team to ensure content and consistency throughout the district. While there is both Elementary (PK-5) and Secondary (6-12) instruction, there is one Building-Level Emergency Response Plan for the whole school. These policies and procedures are for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, including threats by students against themselves, which includes suicide. The following types of procedures are addressed in the plan:

- The use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies.
- Informing the Superintendent or designee of implied or direct threats.
- Determining the level of threat with the Superintendent and building-level emergency response team members.
- Contacting appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
- Monitoring the situation, adjusting the district's responses as appropriate to include possible implementation of the building-level emergency response team.
- Communication with parent/guardian. When a student implies or specifically threatens self-inflicted violence including suicide, the school's social worker directly contacts the respective parents/guardians.

B. The Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Guides in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provide guidance on the district's policies and procedures for responding to direct acts of violence (i.e., Crimes Against Persons, Hostage Taking, Intruder and Kidnapping) by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, including consideration of zero-tolerance policies for school violence. The following types of procedures are addressed in the plan:

- Inform the Superintendent/designee
- Determine the level of threat with the superintendent/designee and the building-level emergency response team.

- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area.
- Monitor the situation; adjust the level of response as appropriate; if necessary, initiate lockdown, evacuation, sheltering and/or early dismissal procedures as needed, if needed.
- Contact appropriate law enforcement agency.

NOTE: The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** “Code of Conduct” (both Elementary and Secondary) describes policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school.

- C. Response protocols are identified in the Building-level Emergency Response Plan in the ICS format along with definitions of ICS Roles and Responsibilities. The Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Guides address specific procedures for responding to bomb threat, intruders, hostage takings and kidnapping, and other emergency situations.
- D. The following protocols for appropriate responses to emergencies are provided as examples of responses to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions and kidnappings:
- Identification of decision-makers.
 - Plans to safeguard students and staff.
 - Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary.
 - Procedures to notify parents.
 - Procedures to notify media.
 - Debriefing procedures.
- E. The district has established policies and procedures to contact parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal. In the **Fort Edward Union Free School District**, the following communication methods are taken:
- For small-scale incidents, school personnel directly call the parents/guardians of all students directly impacted by any acts of violence. All other parents/guardians receive an informational letter. The Building Level Emergency Response Team and Post-Incident Response Team are activated and available as needed. If needed, community meetings are scheduled in a timely manner for further discussion.
 - For any major incident, the district works with the media (TV, radio) to relay pertinent school related information (i.e., how and where can parents be reunited with children, etc.) It is unfortunate, but important to remember, that major emergencies can quickly tie up phone lines with in coming and out going calls and roads can be quickly blocked by the traffic of emergency vehicles, concerned parents and community members. School personnel directly call the parents/guardians of all students directly impacted by any acts of violence. All other parents/guardians receive an informational letter. Community meetings are scheduled in a timely manner, for further discussion.

Section IV: Communication with Others

The District-wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for the Building-level Emergency Response Plan.

- A. The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** is fortunate to have substantial ties to the community of Fort Edward, Washington County, and various state agencies. If there were to be an emergency within any of our facilities, that facility would call 911 for emergency assistance. If involvement is needed from other local government agencies, then the Superintendent or designee would act as that contact person. Additional procedures for communications can be found in the Building-level Emergency Response Plan including local emergency contacts and phone numbers, and the NYS/BOCES Communication Flow Chart. These contacts provide guidance for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local government. The following examples are the types of arrangements that could be used by the district:
- Superintendent (IC-Incident Commander or backup IC) in an emergency would contact the county dispatch center for fire, EMS, or police by calling 911.
 - Superintendent (IC or backup IC) contacts the highest-ranking local government official for notification and/or assistance.
- B. Arrangements 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 is carried out through the protocols established in the NYS Communication Flow Chart. The following are examples of the types of arrangements that could be used by the district during county-wide emergencies:
- Superintendent (IC or backup IC) in an emergency contacts the Washington County 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: Town of North Washington Police, Washington County Civil Defense Office, American Red Cross, Washington County Emergency Services Office, New York State Police, Washington County Sheriff, Washington County Mental Health Office and Needham Risk Management.
 - If the emergency is within the school district boundaries and has the potential to impact the surrounding community, the Superintendent or designee notifies the appropriate city officials (Example: Mayor, Highway Dept., City Administrator, and/or Public Safety). Likewise, should an emergency within the community that has the potential to impact the school, the Superintendent should be notified immediately.
- C. If there is a disaster within the district that has the potential to impact other educational agencies within the district boundaries, the Chief Emergency Officer informs all necessary parties.

Section V: Prevention and Intervention Strategies

The District-wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

- A. The district has developed policies and procedures related to school building security, including, where appropriate: visitor sign-in and badge procedures, employee badges, security procedures.
- B. The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** has implemented procedures 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, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district or

board, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information. The district has and continues to participate in programs such as: **child abuse and prevention workshops, programs designed to provide staff on how to identify potentially violent behaviors and other risk factors. The district additionally employs a school psychologist, school counselors, special education staff and a school nurse who are instrumental in assisting the district in identifying early warning signs in students, early intervention/prevention strategies and the development of violence prevention instruction for staff.**

- C. Appropriate prevention and intervention strategies such as:
- **Collaborative agreements 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**
 - **Non-violent conflict resolution training programs**
 - **Peer mediation programs**
 - **Extended day and other school safety programs**
- D. The district has created and supported strategies for improving communication among students and between students and staff and reporting of potentially violent incidents, such as the establishment of:
- **Peer mediation;**
 - **Conflict resolution;**
 - **Creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence, Establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence;**
 - **Others based on district need.**

The **Fort Edward Union Free School District** has descriptions of duties, hiring and screening process, and requirements for the training of hall monitors and other school safety personnel. These can be found in the confidential Building-level Emergency Response Plan.

E. Section VI: 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 school building plan by deploying district resources that support the school’s building-level emergency response team and the post-incident response team.

Recovery plans include mental health/emotional recovery, academic, physical and business recovery, and can continue long after the actual emergency. **The District has social worker and school psychologist resources and support systems. The District has the ability to coordinate with school, local, Washington County and State disaster mental health services. The District’s role with mental health services includes looking at the school culture and climate, providing student access to services and following threat assessment procedures.**

A. District Support for Fort Edward Union Free School District

The Building-level Emergency Response Plan provides resources for supporting the building-level emergency response team and post-incident response team. The district’s Incident

Command System (ICS) identifies back-ups to relieve team members. This provides team members the opportunity to rotate personnel, to fill in if assigned personnel are unavailable and to debrief in a supportive environment.

The district realizes that some emergencies may overwhelm an individual school's ability to manage an extreme crisis. If/when the school is faced with an emergency such as threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the district-wide school safety team assists as follows:

- Acting as a sounding board regarding the implied or direct threats and/or violent acts.
- Assisting in determining the level of threat and appropriate response.
- Monitoring the situation and adjusting the district's response as appropriate.
- Assisting with parent/guardian, faculty/staff, and media communication.
- Assisting with coordinating building and grounds security in conjunction with local and State Police.
- Assisting with offering a backup post-incident response team (i.e., another school district's team and/or an outside group) as needed, if needed.
- Offering debriefing sessions as needed working in conjunction with local, Washington County and/or State emergency responders.

B. Disaster Mental Health Services

If/when a building-level emergency response team or post-incident response team is faced with an emergency that may overwhelm the school's ability to manage an extreme crisis, the district-wide school safety team assists as follows:

- Activating the district-wide post-incident response team. The district has a school social worker, two school psychologists, and a school nurse who have local connections to:
 - Neighboring school districts
 - Washington County Department of Mental Health
- Offering district support and looking for continued feedback from those directly impacted during the incident, with projected plans to assist if needed during heightened stressful times such as a re-occurrence of a similar event and anniversaries of the original event.
- Assisting with parent/guardian, student, and faculty/staff debriefing and/or post-incident crisis intervention. The debriefing is also used in part to evaluate the district's plan for possible revisions. If needed, assisting in contacting additional outside mental health resources such as the National Organization for Victim Assistance (1-800-try-nova; www.try-nova.org).
- Assisting the schools with written statements going out to faculty/staff, parents/guardians, press releases and media requests through the district's Public Information Officer.

The district supports the recovery phase and reevaluates current multi-hazard and violence prevention practices and school safety activities.

Appendices:

Appendix 1:

Listing of all school buildings covered by the District-Wide School Safety Plan with addresses of buildings and contact names and telephone numbers for buildings employees.

Appendix 2:

Identification of Potential Hazardous Sites

Appendix 3:

Summary of Building-Level Plan

Appendix 4:

The Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors – A Guide for Families and Communities

APPENDIX 1: The following is a listing of all school buildings covered by the district-wide school safety plan:

| BUILDING | ADDRESS | CONTACT TITLE | PHONE |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------|
| Fort Edward School | 220 Broadway Fort Edward, NY, 12828 | Superintendent | (518) 747-4529 |
| Fort Edward UFSD Bus Garage | 220 Broadway Fort Edward, NY, 12828 | Transportation Office | (518) 494-3727 |

APPENDIX 2: Identification of Potential Hazardous Sites

- **COMMUNITY BASED LIST:** A list of areas have been identified as having the potential to impact operations within the district. This list was created for reference and awareness. It is not all-inclusive for every emergency. However, these areas have been identified as having the most probable impact on district facilities or district boundaries should they have or create an emergency. A list of potential community-based hazards or emergency situations has been noted in the confidential Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.
- **SCHOOL BASED LIST:** The district team has recognized that there are many factors that could cause an emergency within our school building. There are also factors that need to be considered when responding to an emergency. A list of potential internal and external hazards or emergency situations has been noted in the confidential Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

Commissioner's Regulation 155.17

INTRODUCTION

Emergencies in schools must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. Schools are at risk of acts of violence, natural, and manmade disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in schools.

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

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The Fort Edward Union Free School District's Building-level Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Fort Edward Union Free School District Board of Education, the Principals of the Fort Edward Union Free School District schools appointed a Building-level Emergency Response Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the School Emergency Response Plan.

B. Identification of School Teams

Each building has developed two emergency teams:

- Building-level Emergency Response Team
- Building-level Post-incident Response Team

C. Concept of Operations

- The initial response to all emergencies will be by the School Emergency Response Team.
- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified.
- Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols.

D. Plan review and public comment

- This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the Building-level Emergency Response Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before September 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education.
- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 (e)(3), a summary of this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The School Board may adopt the district-wide and building-level plans only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plans must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.
- Building-level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.
- Full copies of the Building-level Emergency Response Plan will be supplied to both local and State Police within 30 days of adoption.

PLAN SUMMARY

RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A. Designation of School Teams

- A Building-level Emergency Response Team, including the members required by regulation, has been created. Members of the team include: school safety personnel; local law enforcement officials; representatives of teacher, administrator, and parent organizations; local ambulance and other emergency response agencies; community members; other school personnel; and other representatives appointed by the Board of Education.
- A Building-level Post-emergency Response Team, including the members required by regulation, has been created. Members of the team include: school personnel; medical personnel; mental health counselors; and others who can assist the school community in coping with the aftermath of a serious violent incident or emergency.

B. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

- Training for emergency teams and individuals who have safety responsibility, including de-escalation training, has been conducted as determined in the district-wide school safety plan.
- Procedures for an annual review and the conduct of drills and exercises to test components of this school's plan, including the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials have been developed and will be implemented.
- The District-wide School Safety Plan requires annual multi-hazard training for students and staff. The school's plan describes how this training will be provided to staff and students in the building.

C. Identification of Sites of Potential Emergencies

The District-wide School Safety Plan requires an identification of sites of potential emergency. The Building-level Emergency Response Team has identified both internal and external hazards that may warrant protective actions, such as the evacuation and sheltering of the school population.

RESPONSE

A. Assignment of Responsibilities

A chain of command consistent with the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) will be used in response to an emergency in the building. In the event of an emergency, the building's response team may adapt NIIMS/ICS principles based on the needs of the incident.

B. Continuity of Operations

The building has developed procedures to continue operations during an emergency.

C. Access to Floor Plans

Procedures have been developed to ensure that crisis response, fire and law enforcement agencies have access to floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school's interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area.

D. Notification and Activation

Procedures have been developed to ensure that crisis response, fire and law enforcement agencies have access to floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school's interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area.

Internal and external communication systems have been developed that will be used in emergencies.

Procedures are in place for notification and activation of the Building-level Emergency Response Plan.

E. Hazard Guidelines

The District-wide School Safety Plan includes multi-hazard response plans for taking actions in response to an emergency. The school building's plan includes building-specific guidelines for the following types of emergencies: Threats of Violence, Intruder, Hostage/Kidnapping, Explosive/Bomb Threat, Natural/Weather Related, Hazardous Material, Civil Disturbance, Biological, School Bus Accident, Radiological, Gas Leak, Epidemic, or Others as determined by the Building-level Emergency Response Team.

F. Evacuation Procedures

Policies and procedures have been developed for the safe evacuation of students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school in the event of a serious violent incident which include at least the following:

- Evacuation before, during and after school hours (including security during evacuation)
- Evacuation routes (internal & external)
- Sheltering sites (internal & external)
- Procedures for addressing medical needs
- Transportation
- Emergency notification of persons in parental relation to the students
- Other procedures as determined by the Building-level Emergency Response Team.

G. Security of Crime Scene

Policies and procedures have been established for securing and restricting access to the crime scene in order to preserve evidence from being disturbed or destroyed in cases of violent crimes on school property.

RECOVERY

The Building-level Emergency Response Plan will be coordinated 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

Appendix 4 – The Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors – A Guide for Families and Communities

Early Warning Signs

It is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence. In some situations and for some youth, different combinations of events, behaviors, and emotions may lead to aggressive rage or violent behavior toward self or others. School personnel and students as well as parents are often in a good position to observe these early warning signs.

None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate--and potentially harmful--to use the early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children. Rather, the warning signs are offered only as an aid in identifying and referring children who may need help. A good rule of thumb is to assume that these warning signs, especially when they are presented in combination, indicate a need for further analysis to determine an appropriate intervention.

The information that follows and such other information as may be appropriate concerning Early Warning shall be made available to all employees in a form to be determined by the Superintendent. It is the policy of the Fort Edward Union Free School District that employees and students use the early warning signs only for identification and referral purposes. Trained professionals should make diagnoses in consultation with the child's parents or guardian.

The following early warning signs are cited by the United States Department of Education in its publication entitled **Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools** and are presented with the following qualifications: **they are not equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness**. They include:

- **Social withdrawal.** In some situations, gradual and eventually complete withdrawal from social contacts can be an important indicator of a troubled child. The withdrawal often stems from feelings of depression, rejection, persecution, unworthiness, and lack of confidence.
- **Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.** Research has shown that the majority of children who are isolated and appear to be friendless are not violent. In fact, these feelings are sometimes characteristic of children and youth who may be troubled, withdrawn, or have internal issues that hinder development of social affiliations. However, research also has shown that in some cases feelings of isolation and not having friends are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.
- **Excessive feelings of rejection.** In the process of growing up, and in the course of adolescent development, many young people experience emotionally painful rejection. Children who are troubled often are isolated from their mentally healthy peers. Their responses to rejection will depend on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing their emotional distress in negative ways-including violence. Some aggressive children who are rejected by non-aggressive peers seek out aggressive friends who, in turn, reinforce their violent tendencies.
- **Being a victim of violence.** Children who are victims of violence-including physical or sexual abuse-in the community, at school, or at home are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.
- **Feelings of being picked on and persecuted.** The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied, singled out for ridicule, and humiliated at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support in addressing these feelings, some children may vent them in inappropriate ways-including possible aggression or violence.

- **Low school interest and poor academic performance.** Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to consider whether there is a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits the child's capacity to learn. In some situations--such as when the low achiever feels frustrated, unworthy, chastised, and denigrated--acting out and aggressive behaviors may occur. It is important to assess the emotional and cognitive reasons for the academic performance change to determine the true nature of the problem.
- **Expression of violence in writings and drawings.** Children and youth often express their thoughts, feelings, desires, and intentions in their drawings and in stories, poetry, and other written expressive forms. Many children produce work about violent themes that for the most part is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence in writings and drawings that is directed at specific individuals (family members, peers, other adults) consistently over time, may signal emotional problems and the potential for violence. Because there is a real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, it is important to seek the guidance of a qualified professional--such as a school psychologist, counselor, or other mental health specialist--to determine its meaning.
- **Uncontrolled anger.** Everyone gets angry; anger is a natural emotion. However, anger that is expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior toward self or others.
- **Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors.** Children often engage in acts of shoving and mild aggression. However, some mildly aggressive behaviors such as constant hitting and bullying of others that occur early in children's lives, if left unattended, might later escalate into more serious behaviors.
- **History of discipline problems.** Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems both in school and at home may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These unmet needs may be manifested in acting out and aggressive behaviors. These problems may set the stage for the child to violate norms and rules, defy authority, disengage from school, and engage in aggressive behaviors with other children and adults.
- **Past history of violent and aggressive behavior.** Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Aggressive and violent acts may be directed toward other individuals, be expressed in cruelty to animals, or include fire setting. Youth who show an early pattern of antisocial behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk for future aggressive and antisocial behavior. Similarly, youth who engage in overt behaviors such as bullying, generalized aggression and defiance, and covert behaviors such as stealing, vandalism, lying, cheating, and fire setting also are at risk for more serious aggressive behavior. Research suggests that age of onset may be a key factor in interpreting early warning signs. For example, children who engage in aggression and drug abuse at an early age (before age 12) are more likely to show violence later on than are children who begin such behavior at an older age. In the presence of such signs it is important to review the child's history with behavioral experts and seek parents' observations and insights.
- **Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes.** All children have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and physical appearance--when coupled with other factors--may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different. Membership in hate groups or the willingness to victimize individuals with disabilities or health problems also should be treated as early warning signs.

- **Drug use and alcohol use.** Apart from being unhealthy behaviors, drug use and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes children and youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.
- **Affiliation with gangs.** Gangs that support anti-social values and behaviors--including extortion, intimidation, and acts of violence toward other students--cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are influenced by these groups--those who emulate and copy their behavior, as well as those who become affiliated with them--may adopt these values and act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations. Gang-related violence and turf battles are common occurrences tied to the use of drugs that often result in injury and/or death.
- **Inappropriate access to, possession and use of firearms.** Children and youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows that such youngsters also have a higher probability of becoming victims. Families can reduce inappropriate access and use by restricting, monitoring, and supervising children's access to firearms and other weapons. Children who have a history of aggression, impulsiveness, or other emotional problems should not have access to firearms and other weapons.
- **Serious threats of violence.** Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence. Recent incidents across the country clearly indicate that threats to commit violence against oneself or others should be taken very seriously. Steps must be taken to understand the nature of these threats and to prevent them from being carried out.

Identifying and Responding to Imminent Warning Signs

Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response.

No single warning sign can predict that a dangerous act will occur. Rather, imminent warning signs usually are presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors or threats directed at peers, employees, or other individuals. Usually, imminent warning signs are evident to more than one employee member--as well as to the child's family.

Imminent warning signs may include:

- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Severe destruction of property.
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of lethal violence.
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

Threat Assessment

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be written, spoken, or symbolic – as in motioning with one's hands as though shooting or strangling another person. There are principally four types of threats – direct, indirect, veiled and conditional.

Threats are made for a variety of reasons: as a warning signal, a reaction to fear of punishment, anxiety, demand for attention or as retribution for a perceived or actual slight or affront. Threats may be intended to taunt, intimidate, assert power, punish, manipulate, coerce, frighten, terrorize, compel desired behavior,

to strike back for an injury, injustice or slight; to be disruptive, to challenge authority or to protect oneself.

Individuals who make threats normally manifest other behaviors or emotions that are indicative of a problem. These can include: signs of depression, prolonged brooding, evidence of frustration or disappointment; fantasies of destruction or revenge in conversations, writings, drawings or other actions; expressions of intense love, fear, rage, revenge, excitement or pronounced desire for recognition. Use of alcohol or drugs can be an aggravating factor, as can a romantic breakup, failing grades or conflicts with parents or friends.

Personality Traits

Personality traits and behaviors that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- a student intentionally or unintentionally revealing clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act;
- low tolerance of frustration, easily hurt, insulted, angered by real or perceived injustices;
- poor coping skills, demonstrating little ability to deal with frustration, criticism, disappointment, failure, rejection or humiliation;
- lack of resiliency, is unable to bounce back from frustrating and disappointing experiences; failed love relationship, cannot accept or comes to term with humiliation or rejection;
- injustice collector, nurses resentment over real or perceived injustices, will not forgive or forget those who s/he believes are responsible;
- depression manifested by lethargy, physical fatigue, morose or dark outlook on life, malaise, lack of interest in activities once enjoyed, unpredictable anger, generalized or excessive hatred to others, hopelessness about the future, psychomotor agitation, restlessness, inattention, sleep and eating disorders;
- narcissism, self-centered, lacking insight to the needs / feelings of others, blames others for failure and disappointment, may embrace the role of victim, display signs of paranoia, self-importance or grandiosity masking feelings of unworthiness, notably think or thin skinned;
- alienation, feels different or estranged from others, more than being a loner, involves feelings of isolation, sadness, loneliness, not belonging or fitting in;
- dehumanizes others, fails to see others as humans, sees them as objects to be thwarted;
- lacks empathy, demonstrates inability to understand feelings of others, may ridicule displays of emotion as weak or stupid;
- exaggerated sense of entitlement, has a sense of being superior and constantly expects special treatment and consideration;
- attitude of superiority, has a sense of being superior to others, smarter, more creative, talented, experienced, more worldly;
- exaggerated / pathological need for attention, positive or negative, regardless of the circumstances;
- externalizes blame, consistently refuses to take responsibility for own actions, blames others, often seems impervious to rational argument and common sense;
- masks low self-esteem, may display arrogance, self-glorifying attitude, avoids high visibility or involvement, may be considered a “non-entity” by peers;
- anger management problems, manifested by consistent temper tantrums, melodramatic displays, brooding, sulking, seething silence, reacts out of proportion to cause, may direct anger to those who have no connection to triggering incident;
- intolerance, racial, ethnic, religious and other, displays symbols and slogans of intolerance on self or possessions;
- inappropriate humor, macabre, insulting, belittling, or mean.
- Attempts to manipulate others, attempts to con and manipulate to win trust so others will rationalize aberrant behavior;
- Lack of trust, is untrusting and suspicious of the motives and intentions of others, may approach clinically paranoid state;

- Closed social group, introverted, with acquaintances rather than friends, may associate only with a single small group to the exclusion of others;
- Manifests a dramatic change in behavior, academic performance, disobedience of school rules, schedules, dress codes etc.
- Rigid and opinionated, judgemental and cynical, strong opinions on topics about which little knowledge is possessed, disregards facts, logic and reasoning;
- Demonstrates unusual interest in sensational violence;
- Fascination with violence-filled entertainment, movies, TV, computer games, music videos, printed material, inordinate amount of time with violent computer games and websites involving violence weapons and disturbing objects;
- Has negative role models, drawn to negative, inappropriate role models, Hitler, Satan or others associated with violence and destruction;
- Manifests behavior that is relevant to carrying out a threat, spends inordinate amount of time practicing with firearms, on violent websites, begins excluding normal pursuits such as homework, class, work, time with friends.

Family Dynamics

Family dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Turbulent parent / child relationship, relationship is particularly difficult, can be uniquely evident following recent or multiple moves, loss of parent, addition of step-parent, dismisses parents role in his / her life, evidence of violence in the home;
- Acceptance of pathological behavior, parents do not react to behavior that most would find disturbing' parents appear unable to recognize or acknowledge problems in their children, respond quite defensively to real or perceived criticism of child, parents appear unconcerned about, minimize or reject reports of inappropriate behavior by child;
- Access to weapons, family keeps guns, weapons, explosives materials in the home and accessible to the children, weapons treated carelessly, without normal safety precautions, parent or role model may handle weapons irresponsibly or use as device for intimidation;
- Lack of family intimacy or closeness;
- Student "rules the roost," few limits set for children, parents regularly submit to child's demands, student insists on inordinate degree of privacy, parents have little information about student activities, school life, friends, or other relationships.
- No limits or monitoring of TV or Internet, parents do not supervise, limit or monitor TV, Internet, computer use or access.

School Dynamics

School dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Student attachment to school, student appears detached from school, other students, teachers, and school activities;
- Tolerance for disrespectful behavior, school does little to prevent or punish disrespectful behavior between students, bullying is part of the school culture, school authorities are oblivious to bullying, little or no intervention by school authorities, school atmosphere promotes racial or class divisions, allows them to remain unchallenged;
- Inequitable discipline, discipline is inequitably applied or is perceived as such by students or employees;
- Inflexible culture, official and unofficial patterns of behavior, values and relationships among students, teachers and administrators are static, unyielding and insensitive to changes in society and the changing needs of newer students;
- Pecking order among students, certain groups have more prestige and respect – both officially and unofficially by students and school officials;

- Code of silence, prevails among students, little trust between students and employees;
- Unsupervised computer access, access is unsupervised and unmonitored, students are able to play violent games, explore inappropriate websites, promote violent hate groups, give instruction in bomb making etc.

Social Dynamics

Social dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Media, entertainment and technology, easy unmonitored access to media, entertainment and Internet sites with violent themes and images;
- Peer groups, intense and extensive involvement with a group that shares fascination with violence or extremeist beliefs;
- Drugs and alcohol, knowledge of student's use of drugs or alcohol or changes in such use is important;
- Outside interests, outside interests of students are important to note as they can mitigate or increase the school's level of concern in assessing a threat;
- Copycat effect, school shooting and other violent incidents that receive intense media attention can generate threats or copycat violence elsewhere, school employees should be highly vigilant in then aftermath of such incidents.