

## **City School District of New Rochelle District-wide School Safety Plan**

### **Introduction:**

On July 24, 2000, Governor George E. Pataki signed into law the most comprehensive legislative plan in the nation, entitled Project SAVE (Safe Schools Against Violence in Education), to promote a safer and more effective learning environment within New York State's schools. 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. 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.

### **District Mission Statement:**

The City School District of New Rochelle, through an active partnership amongst community, parent, staff and students, will provide a high-quality and challenging education for every child, in a safe, nurturing environment that embraces our rich diversity and drives our success.

### **Community Profile:**

The District is located in the southeastern portion of Westchester County on the Long Island sound, approximately fifteen miles from midtown Manhattan, and is coterminous with the City, which was settled in 1688 and was incorporated as a city in 1899.

The character of the district is both urban and suburban residential. Residential housing is comprised of single-family as well as multi-family units. Commercial and industrial activity is principally located in those areas of the City close to Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 1.

The City provides general governmental services including, but not limited to, police and fire protection, garbage collection, street maintenance, sewage collection and recreational programs. The County is responsible for social and health programs and maintains a corrections system. Sewage treatment is provided through various County sewer districts.

Higher education is offered by Iona College, The College of New Rochelle and Monroe College, which are situated in the District, as well as various colleges and universities in the County, including Westchester Community College, sponsored by the County.

The City is served by three major highways and roadways; the New England Thruway (Interstate 95), The Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) and the Hutchinson River Parkway. CSX provides railroad freight service, The Metro-North Commuter Railroad provides passenger service to and from New York City and Connecticut, while Amtrak provides service nationwide. The Westchester County Airport provides scheduled airline service to many major metropolitan airports. LaGuardia, John F. Kennedy, and Newark airports are all less than one hour from the City and residents may utilize various airport limousine services to reach these airports.

City residents and businesses receive electric and natural gas service from the Consolidated Edison Company. The water supply and distribution system for the city is maintained by SUEZ, a private utility. Local and some long-distance telephone services are generally provided by Verizon.

The City School District is comprised of 11 schools: 1 high school, 1 alternative high school (separate campus), 2 middle schools, 6 elementary schools, 1 pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade school, a Universal PreK program that is housed in our Early Childhood Center and at 6 local Nursery Schools, a central office (located at City Hall) a facilities maintenance shop and separate grounds garage. The total square footage of the District is approximately 1.5 million square feet. As reported in the most recent School Report card from the New York State Education Department, student enrollment is broken down as follows:

<u>TOTAL ENROLLMENT</u>		<u>GENDER</u>	<u>ETHNICITY</u>
K-5	4,770	Male 52%	Black/African American 21%
6-8	2,426	Female 48%	Hispanic or Latino 47%
9-12	<u>3,483</u>		Asian/Native Hawaiian
			Other Pacific Islander 5%
	10,679		White 27%

The District is currently in the midst of a \$106 million capital bond project designed to bring its facilities to a satisfactory condition as defined by the New York State Education Department’s mandated 5-Year Building Condition Survey. Among other things, some portion of the bond proceeds has been earmarked for certain security related infrastructure. In addition to these monies, the District allocates funds in its annual operating budget to support security related initiatives. The District is also in the process of executing a Unified Communication Strategy (“UCS”) which is an integral component of its overall security program. The UCS will enable the District to align and integrate its technology network to provide crucial electronic security functionality. In 2013 the District commissioned a security assessment conducted by Vigilant Resources International (“VRI”) which the school has been using to help enhance its safety and security measures. Since this report is now 5 years old it is felt that an updated security assessment must be made taking into consideration current technologies, best practices and knowledge gained from ongoing incidents. The net result of all of these efforts, along with and up-to-date security assessment will be utilized to provide a cutting edge, state of the art security system.

**Purpose:**

The City School District of New Rochelle has developed this District-Wide School Safety Plan to prevent and/or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies, to respond effectively to crises and to facilitate coordination with local resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies.

This District Safety/Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to NYS Education Law §2801-a and 8 NYCRR §155.17. The District-wide School Safety Team was charged with the initial development of this District-Wide School Safety Plan and the ongoing review and revision of the plan.

The Superintendent or their representative shall be designated as the district chief emergency officer responsible for coordinating communication between school staff and law enforcement and first responders, and ensuring staff understanding of the district-level safety plan. The chief emergency officer shall also be responsible for ensuring the completion and yearly updating of building-level emergency response plans.

**Identification of the District-Wide School Safety Team:**

The City School District of New Rochelle has created a District-wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the School Board, teachers, administrators, parent organizations, school safety personnel, and other school personnel. The team members include:

- Assistant Superintendent of Business
- City Manager of New Rochelle
- New Rochelle Police Department
- New Rochelle Fire Department
- Director of Security
- PTSA Representative(s)
- Board of Education Representative(s)
- Teacher
- Community Member(s)

**Identification of School Building Safety Teams:**

Each building principal shall appoint members of the building safety team which should include but not be limited to representatives of teacher, administrator, school safety and other school personnel, community members, and local law enforcement and fire officials.

**Operational Concepts:**

Protocols reflected in the District-wide School Safety Plan will guide the development and implementation of individual Building-level Emergency Response Plans.

In the event of a violent incident call 911 and then follow the School Building Safety Plan.

In the event of all other emergency situations the initial response at the individual school will be coordinated by the School Building Safety Team.

Upon the activation of the School Building Safety Team, the Superintendent of Schools or their designee and the Director of Security will be notified.

**Plan review and public comment:**

This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the District-wide School Safety Team and reviewed on an annual basis on or before September 1 of each year.

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 (e) (3), this district-wide safety plan will be made available for public comment 30 days prior to its adoption. Such district-wide plans may be adopted by the school board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

While linked to the District-wide School Safety Plan, School Building Emergency Response Plans shall be kept confidential, including but not limited to the floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area, and shall not be disclosed except to authorized department or school staff, law enforcement officers and fire department members..

Each board of education shall ensure a copy of its district-wide safety plan is filed with the commissioner and all amendments to such plan be filed with the commissioner no later than thirty days after their adoption. A copy of each building- level emergency response plan shall be filed with the New Rochelle Police Department, New Rochelle Fire Department and with the state police, within thirty days of adoption and no later than October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Identification of potentially dangerous/hazardous sites:**

1. District personnel have identified and located areas of potential emergencies in and around each building. These sites have been mapped or outlined for each building.
2. Fire inspection done annually by New Rochelle Fire Department with District staff
3. Individual School Safety Plans have identified information such as electrical panels, gas lines, and water supply lines.
4. Potentially dangerous sites are checked regularly by district staff. An annual visual inspection is done by an outside facilities management group with a comprehensive inspection done every five years. These include but are not limited to:
  - a. Systems Sites (Work order system used to schedule repairs & address deficiencies)
  - b. Environmental Problem Sites (potential flooding areas, roof leaks, sidewalks, heating and cooling systems, sidewalks, mold, and roof top units)
  - c. Site Considerations-New Rochelle High School
    1. List of chemicals used in Science labs updated each year
    2. Fine Arts Department-kilns
    3. Pool-chemical storage
    4. Kitchen-cooking, grease storage
    5. In the case of Central Administration, the following are identified as potential issues that would impair normal operations:
      - a. Power failure/loss of utilities
      - b. Very busy street: North Avenue

- c. Location next to police station and municipal offices
- d. Off-site considerations--reliance on City of New Rochelle officials

**Prevention/Intervention:**

The City School District of New Rochelle has implemented strategies for prevention of violent incidents and for identifying and reducing risks, as well as anticipating and responding to emergencies including weather or loss of utilities or services.

1. Training will be provided during Superintendent's Conference days, faculty meetings, and other after school or summer periods.
2. All school staff members are required to participate in annual training on the emergency response plan by September 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year or within 10 days of hire, and this school safety training shall include components on violence prevention and mental health. The District must certify that this training has been completed.
3. All security staff and general school aides are required to annually participate in 8 hours of approved professional training related to their job to maintain their NYS Security license. Other training topics include:
  - a. Non-violent crisis intervention training
  - b. Bullying prevention
  - c. Incident reporting
4. School building safety and security equipment:
  - a. All schools have alarm systems
  - b. Surveillance cameras are used in all school buildings
  - c. All school buildings have safety equipment to assist in the event of a weather emergency or evacuation-- hand- held stop signs, reflective vests, flashlights, LED lanterns, weather radio
  - d. All school buildings have keyless entry and buzzer/camera systems on the main door.
  - e. Evacuation of students/staff with mobility issues.
5. All schools have a range of programs to promote a positive school climate and positive youth development. Principles of civility and responsible citizenship are also integrated throughout the pre-k-Grade 12 curriculum. The following programs are a sample of the programs implemented to address behaviors and risk factors that can lead to violence.
  - a. RTI (Response to Intervention) and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports)
  - b. Rethink – social and emotional growth
  - c. Peer Mediation
  - d. Child Lures
  - e. BEST Buddies
  - f. Character Education
  - g. SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions)
6. All schools have at least one AED with locations posted at entrances to buildings. Nurses, Physical Education teachers, coaches and select custodians are trained in CPR/AED.

7. Staff members wear identification badges so they can readily be identified.
8. Each school building uses a sign in process with name tags for visitors to control the access to buildings.
9. The following proactive security measures have been implemented:
  - a. All schools have monitored entrances, control access and cameras.
  - b. Visitors are required to carry Identification, and to sign in.
  - c. All schools will educate students, staff and parents about the importance of school safety.
  - d. All schools will hold drills that help promote school safety. Such drills shall be held at least 12 times in each school year, eight of which required drills shall be held between September first and December thirty-first of each year. Drills shall be conducted at different times of the school day with at least one of the eight required evacuation drills occurring during a mass gathering event such as lunch or an assembly.
  - e. Fire/Evacuation drills-8 per year
  - f. Lock Down (Intruder)-4 per year - Each school will maintain records of all School Safety Team Meeting and building drills and report this information annually to the District Safety Team.
  - g. All schools will develop and operate reporting, referral and counseling procedures designed to identify and work with potentially aggressive and violent students.

#### **Training, Drills, and Exercises:**

1. By September 15<sup>th</sup> of every year all staff members will be receiving training in their Building Emergency Response Plan (BERP).
2. All security staff and general school aides hold NYS Security Guard licenses. State law requires training, fingerprinting and background checks for all licensed Security Guards.
3. All security personnel are hired through the civil service process with job descriptions and acceptable training and experience outlined in the employment postings.
4. As required by Section 807 of the Education Law, each school principal must instruct and train their students on how to exit the building in the shortest possible time without confusion or panic. The instruction must include drills or rapid dismissals. Eight (8) fire/evacuation drills must be held each school year, four of which shall be held prior to December 31. Instruction must be given to pupils in the procedure to follow in the event that a fire occurs during the lunch period, unless at least one drill is held during the lunch period. Summer schools must hold at least two drills, one of which must be held during the first week of the summer session.
5. As required by SAVE legislation (155.17), each school district shall, at least once every school year, conduct one test of its emergency plans, including sheltering or early dismissal, not to occur more than 15 minutes earlier than the regular dismissal.

6. In the case of after-school programs, events or performances which are conducted within a school building and which include persons who do not regularly attend classes in such school building, the principal or other person in charge of the building shall require the teacher or person in charge of such after-school program, event or performance to notify persons in attendance at the beginning of each such program, event or performance, of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency so that they may be able to respond in a timely, orderly manner.

### **Responding to Threats and DASA:**

The district has developed the following safety and security procedures to protect students, staff and visitors from indirect and direct threats and acts of violence.

1. Reporting of threats and acts of violence to school authorities:
  - a. Students are required to inform school staff about any threat or acts of violence to themselves, others or property.
  - b. Staff are required to inform administration of any threat of violence to students, themselves, others or property.
  - c. Building principals are required to notify Local Law enforcement, the Superintendent's office and Director of Security.
  - d. Parents and visitors are encouraged to tell school staff about any indirect or direct threats and acts of violence towards students, themselves, others or property.
  - e. Students, staff, parents and others will be educated about the importance of reporting threats and the procedures of reporting.
2. Investigating threats and acts of violence:
  - a. The building administrator will investigate reported threats and acts of violence and will make the determination of disciplinary measures consistent with the Code of Conduct.
  - b. Serious acts will require the involvement of police personnel. (violent offenses in accordance with SAVE requirements)
  - c. Chronic offenders may require a behavior intervention plan, close monitoring, and police involvement.
  - d. Threats placing students, staff and others in imminent danger require an immediate call to the police.
  - e. Allegations of bullying, harassment, and discrimination should be reported to the Dignity Act Coordinator at the building level for investigation.
  - f. All schools will develop and operate reporting, referral and counseling procedures designed to identify and work with potentially aggressive and violent students through Pupil Personnel Services staff and/or building based teams.
3. Report Incidents:
  - a. School administrators must keep records of serious threats and acts of violence and report them annually to the state through the VADIR system.



- b. Incidents of violence, serious threats, intimidation, etc., may require involvement of the police.
- c. Ordinarily district and building administrators are authorized to call the police to respond to the threat or acts of violence. In case of imminent danger, any staff member is authorized to call 911.
- d. Public Information office will handle all contacts with media.
- e. Public Information office will provide information to building staff that can be given to parents and concerned others.
- f. As required by SAVE legislation and the Dignity for All Students Act, incidents of violence as well as material cases of bullying, harassment, and discrimination will be reported to New York State on an annual basis through the VADIR (Violent and Disruptive Incident Report) and Report of incidents concerning school Safety and the Educational Climate.

#### 4. Removing Violent Individuals:

- a. Aggressively dangerous and violent students should only be restrained by qualified staff (CPI Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training certified). Police or Crisis Team (Saint Vincent's Hospital Behavioral Health Evaluation & Referral Services) should be called immediately to remove the student.
- b. Violent adults are to be reported immediately, the authorities called and only removed by police.
- c. Schools should be in **lock down** or hold in place mode when violent people are in the school.
- d. Schools should be in **lock out** when violent/dangerous people or situations occur around the school.

#### 5. Situational Responses:

- a. Responses to Threats-direct or implied threats may be received in various forms: by telephone, written messages, email messages, or the discovery of a suspicious package/device in the school or on the school grounds.
- b. In the event of a direct bomb threat, contact Police at 911 immediately;
  - 1. Initiate the evacuation of the building. Exit routes altered if indicated by specific threat.
  - 2. Provide as much information as possible to law enforcement. Minimize the handling of any documents or materials to avoid damaging the evidence.
  - 3. Work with law enforcement to determine the time required for the investigation so that plans can be made to shelter the students in an alternate site or to dismiss students for the remainder of the school day.
- c. In the event of an implied/indirect threat



1. Contact Police, 911.
  2. Law Enforcement will conduct a threat assessment in consultation with School Administration to determine the next steps.
  3. If indicated, initiate the full/partial evacuation of the building using the standard evacuation procedures.
  - d. Upon discovery of a suspicious package/device, contact Police at 911 immediately.
    1. Provide as much information as possible to law enforcement
    2. If decision is made to evacuate the entire building or a specific area, announce the evacuation and use the standard evacuation procedures with exit routes altered as required.
  - e. Anyone receiving information about an abduction/kidnapping must immediately notify the school building administrator.
    1. Contact Police, 911.
    2. Provide as much information as possible to law enforcement.
6. Identification of appropriate responses to emergencies
- a. The Building Emergency Response Plan (BERP) has been developed to provide consistent responses to emergencies across the school district. This manual includes guidance as to when to contact the police or other emergency services. The following emergency procedures are outlined:
    1. Abduction/Kidnapping
    2. Bomb Threat
    3. Bus Accident
    4. Criminal Offenses (Suspected/Potential)
    5. Death of Student or Staff
    6. Evacuation
    7. Fire/Explosion in the Building
    8. HAZMAT-Hazardous Materials
    9. Intruder/Dangerous Person
    10. Medical Emergencies (injuries and illness)
    11. Severe Weather-Shelter in Place
    12. Suicide
    13. Violent Behavior-Student
    14. Violent Behavior-Large Group Altercation
    15. Terrorism
    16. Transportation Issue
  - b. The School Health Services Department has developed and distributed the following resources; procedures for administration of medication in school and nursing procedures and tasks performed in school; first aid manual; and the emergency “to go” bag. The NYSED school health guidelines binder is also available as a resource and

located in the Health Services Department and in each school health office. Health services staff has received CPR/AED training.

c. The Pupil Services department revised and distributed the **Crisis Intervention Manual** in 2017 which provides a guide for school administrators and pupil services personnel who are responsible for direct and indirect provision of supports and services in times of crisis.

### **Communication with Others:**

1. Procedures for contacting parents, guardians and persons in parental relation to the students of the district in event of a violent incident or early dismissal.

a. The district procedure for early dismissal is as follows:

1. Superintendent or his/her designee decides on an early dismissal.
2. Transportation Director is notified to supply buses.
3. Central and building administrators are informed.
4. Staff and students are informed of closing.
5. Parents are notified of the planned early dismissal through multiple contacts (District Calendar, Blackboard ConnectEd message alert system, District website [www.nredlearn.org](http://www.nredlearn.org) and School websites, Emergency Outreach messages, text messages)
6. Parents are notified about unplanned early dismissal or violent incidents through the Connect Ed message alert system, parents of all students will receive a phone call to regular and emergency phone numbers. When phone calls fail to contact the parent or emergency number, the elementary and middle school student will remain under the supervision of school personnel until parents are notified and pick up the student, or the regular end of the school day, whichever comes first?
7. Parents of high school students are notified through Connect Ed message alert system and then students are dismissed from school.

b. Parents will receive information about the threat or act of violence that determined an early dismissal in their child's school as soon as is practical. This information is limited to information the school is legally permitted to disclose.

2. Arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from local emergency organization, agencies and local government agencies.

a. City School District of New Rochelle has worked with police, fire, EMS, and governmental agencies to obtain assistance during emergencies. Providers have given approval to the City School District of New Rochelle to rely on local personnel, resources and facilities in emergency situations. Our plan provides for accessing emergency mental health services in the event of an emergency or violent incident from Southern Westchester BOCES, Westchester County, and regional mental health agencies.

b. Local list of governmental agencies and community services:

1. City of New Rochelle
2. New Rochelle Fire Commissioner
3. New Rochelle Police Commissioner
4. New York State Police Troop K
5. Westchester Department of Emergency Services
6. Westchester County Health Department
7. Westchester Co. Dept. of Community Mental Health
8. American Red Cross/Westchester
9. Con Ed emergency
10. Poison Control Center
11. BOCES Health, Safety & Risk Management
12. New Rochelle Youth Bureau
13. St. Vincent's Hospital Behavioral Health Evaluation & Referral Services

3. Procedures for contacting parents, guardians and persons in parental relation to the students of the district in event of a school cancellation due to weather or other emergency prior to the school opening.

- a. Parents are notified through multiple contacts (Blackboard Connect Ed message alert system-phone/email messages; District website [www.nredlearn.org](http://www.nredlearn.org) and School websites; messages posted on District Twitter and Facebook page; announcements through local media; and Cablevision EDUC Channel 77 and Verizon Channel 30 in New Rochelle.

**Leadership: Incident Command**

Definition of the chain of command in a manner consistent with the incident command system (ICS)

**Incident Commander (IC):** Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities; has overall responsibility for the incident response; and coordinates and manages all ICS functions.

**Decision Making Process**

