

**PEARL RIVER UNION FREE  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**District Wide  
Emergency Response  
Safety Plan**

**Revised 2016**

**Reviewed June 2018**

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135 West Crooked Hill Road Pearl River, NY 10965

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**Pearl River  
District Wide School Safety Plan**

Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 Project 14

**INTRODUCTION**

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. The Pearl River UFSD is 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 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. 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.

Pearl River supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of the Pearl River Schools encourages and advocates on-going cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

**GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**A. Purpose**

The Pearl River District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Pearl River Board of Education, the Superintendent appointed a District Wide School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the School Safety Plan.

**B. Identification of School Teams**

Pearl River has appointed a District Wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the school Board of Education, students, teachers, administrators, parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel. The members of the team and their positions or affiliations are as follows:

- Marco Pochintesta, Superintendent of Schools (Chief Emergency Officer)
- Diana Musich, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Community Services
- Dr. Robert Roelle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
- Kathleen Ryan, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Business
- Mary Cinelli, Coordinator of School Transportation
- Robert Nelan, Director of Facilities
- Maria Paese, Principal, Pearl River MS
- Todd Santabarbara, Director of Physical Education and Athletics
- Suzanne Horton, Assistant Principal, Pearl River HS
- Diana Gillule, Teacher, Lincoln Avenue Elementary School
- Fiona Burke, RN, Franklin Avenue Elementary School

- Jean Willock, RN, Pearl River HS
- Rebecca Massa, School Psychologist, Lincoln Avenue Elementary School
- Roseanne Daly, RN, Evans Park Elementary School
- Mark Travaglino, Teacher, Pearl River MS
- Frank Shine, Facilities, Pearl River MS
- Members of Fire Districts
- Members of Law Enforcement
- Members of Emergency Medical Services

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

- The School Safety Plan is directly linked to the individual Building Level Emergency Response Plans as a matter of protocol. The activation of a 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 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 Pearl River 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.
- 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 District 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 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 responses.

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

- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e)(3), this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The District Board of Education shall adopt the School Safety Plan only after one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan shall be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

- Full copies of the School Safety Plan and any amendments shall be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption.
- This plan shall be reviewed periodically during the year and maintained by the District Wide School Safety Team. The required annual review shall be completed each year prior to its adoption by the Board of Education.

## **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:

- Character Education Programming
- Anti-bullying Programs
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Programs
- Peer Leadership Programs
- Drug Abuse Resistance Education Programs
- Codes of Conduct
- Crisis Response/Intervention Plans.

### **Facilities Initiatives**

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

- Sign-in procedures and use of visitor ID badges with visual contact.
- Employees use faculty/staff ID badges.
- Schools have developed a single point of access for visitors at each building.
- Installation of interior and exterior surveillance cameras throughout our campuses.

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

- 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 guides and general employee awareness training for building employees conducted by each principal. The annual review of safety plans and procedures includes training in violence prevention and mental health awareness.
  - The annual early go home drill to test evacuation and sheltering procedures.
  - Each school building conducts fire drills throughout the course of the year in compliance with the SED schedule for the purpose of familiarizing employees and students with emergency procedures.
  - A Building Level tabletop exercise run in cooperation with members of local emergency services.
  - All staff meet the annual requirements of mandatory compliance training as set forth in State and Federal regulations.

- The District shall conduct drills and other exercises to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the District Emergency Response Plan. Each principal will be required to complete a minimum number of student drills as follows:
  - 4 lockdown drills, 8 fire/evacuation drills. 8 of which must be conducted by December 31 of each year, the balance must be conducted during the remainder of the school year
- The District shall conduct tabletop exercises with the Building Level safety teams to test the components of the emergency response plan. The narratives, sequence of events and messaging for each exercise shall be developed by select members of the District Wide Safety Team, Emergency Management Consultants and local emergency services. A controller, evaluator and simulator shall conduct each tabletop exercise. The suggestions and necessary enhancements of the Building Level Plan noted during the evaluation shall be documented by the evaluator and provided to the Building Level Safety Team and District Wide Safety Team for further evaluation.
- Topics for training will include general security and safety measures, intervention strategies with difficult or challenging students, building security awareness, and reporting requirements and procedures.

In the execution of their duties, 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.

**Chief Emergency Officer**

Shall be the Superintendent of Schools. The Chief Emergency Officer shall act as the liaison between the District and external agencies during times of emergencies as well as during plan development and maintenance.

**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:

The building principal or his/her 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 School Building Response 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.
- Employees and students shall receive annual training and drill practice on protocols for bomb threats, 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 or his/her 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 works 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, and non-instructional 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. Each building principal is responsible for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors to employees and parents each school year. In addition, employees shall receive training on the District Code-of-Conduct and awareness training on violent behaviors, to be conducted or coordinated by the District Superintendent.

### **C. Hazard Identification**

(Note: Below chart does not include adult education staff/students or non-school programs)

The following sites have the potential for internal or external emergency situations:

- Pear River High School
- Pearl River Middle School
- Lincoln Avenue Elementary School
- Franklin Avenue Elementary School
- Evans Park Elementary School
- District Office
- A Starting Place
- Naurausaun Facilities Building

The buildings and grounds associated with each of these facilities have the potential for a main campus or Building Level emergency or incident.

Sites of potential emergency within Rockland County that have been identified by the Homeland Security task force include:

- Palisades Shopping Center
- The Shops At Nanuet
- Proximity to New York City
- The NY State Thruway
- Tappan Zee Bridge
- Indian Point Nuclear Facility
- Mirant/Bowline Generating Plant
- Orange & Rockland Utilities
- United Water
- Major hospitals (Nyack Hospital, Good Samaritan, Helen Hayes)
- Rockland Psychiatric Center
- Rockland County Correctional Facility

## **RESPONSE**

### **A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)**

- In cases of a seriously 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**

Administrators	Public Address System and Radios. <b><u>All Administrators are authorized by the Superintendent to use ALL CALL on District Phones or PA system to notify the Entire Campus of a threat (i.e. Lockdown, Safety Hold, Shelter in Place, etc.).</u></b>
Teachers and Building staff	Public address system and radios.
Students	Public address system and verbally from supervising teachers
Superintendent	Public address system and radios.
Buildings and Grounds	Public address system and radios.
Board of Education	Phone

**External**

New York State Police: F Troop	911
Orangetown P.D.	911
Rockland Sheriff's Office	911
Pearl River Volunteer Fire Department	911
Parents	<p>District Website: <a href="http://www.pearlriver.org">www.pearlriver.org</a></p> <p>Transportation Phone Emergency Information: (845)620-3857</p> <p>The district will also utilize radio frequency and Radio Stations:</p> <p>Radio Stations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WRCR 1300 AM</li> <li>• WHUD 1400 AM / 100.7 FM</li> <li>• Rockland County Emergency Services Station 1640 AM</li> </ul> <p>Television Stations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fox 5</li> <li>NBC</li> <li>FIOS 1 News</li> <li>News 12</li> </ul>

The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services would be responsible for conveying emergency information to educational facilities within the Pearl River UFSD. The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services 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 by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Community Services. Each such agency would report material changes to such data to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services, in writing, within seven days of such change.

Information will be provided to parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal through the use of the District's automated mass communication system by employees at the building level using the student/parent directory and/or local and regional radio and TV stations. These are the same stations that are used to announce official delays or closings. This information 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 Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services or a Superintendent's designee.

### **B. Situational Responses – Multi-Hazard Response and Response Protocols**

Staff cooperation is critical when an act of violence occurs. In the event of a criminal act, bomb threat, civil disturbance, intrusion, hostage taking, kidnapping or other threatening event, staff response may include:

1. Verbal instructions to cease the behavior.
2. Call for assistance from other staff.
3. Verbal instructions to follow classroom emergency procedures based on the main office's instruction over the public address system.
4. Call law enforcement and other necessary emergency response agencies.
5. Removal of any onlookers that could aggravate the situation.
6. Not invading the space of the individual(s) involved.
7. Removal of any potentially dangerous weapons or objects.
8. Physical restraint if other actions do not stop the violence.

In the event of a violent incident, the following policies and procedures are to be followed at the District level:

- The Superintendent will ensure the Building Level team has adequate resources to respond to the emergency.
- The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services will develop a public information strategy to communicate necessary information to the media, parents and staff.
- The Superintendent, who is the leader of the District Crisis Intervention Team, will notify the team of the event.
- The Superintendent will notify appropriate Board of Education members of the incident.
- The Superintendent will file any necessary information with the State Education Department (for example, school bomb threat data cards).

In the event of a violent incident, the following policies and procedures are to be followed at the school building level:

- Student reports an incident to an adult or adult observes an incident.
- Adult takes appropriate action as necessary to respond to the incident.
- A written referral is forwarded to the building principal.
- School guidance counselor, social worker and nurse are involved when necessary.

- Building principal will conference with the student(s) involved to determine the problems/issues.
- If parental notification is necessary, building principal will contact the parent(s) and may arrange a parent conference.
- Appropriate discipline will be administered following the District Code of Conduct and incident reported to the State Education Department when appropriate.

Follow-up 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 plan lists building specific response actions to criminal acts, bomb threats, civil disturbance, intrusion, hostage taking, kidnapping, as well as technological and natural disasters.

### **Response Protocols**

The Pearl River Schools have a comprehensive multi-hazard Emergency Response Plan. This plan is updated annually. Copies of the plan are available in each Principal's Office as well as in the Superintendent's Office and the Central Office. Elements of the plan include:

- Chain of Command and Incident Command Structure (ICS)
- Other Relevant Parties
- Emergency Planning Committee
- Emergency Telephone Numbers
- Telephone Tree
- CPR/AED List
- Fleet List
- A list of hazardous incidents and a response plan for each (e.g. bomb threat, hostage, intruder, natural disaster, structural failure, et. al.)

## **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 services organizations and local government agencies:

- Superintendent/Designee in an emergency contacts dispatch point or 911 center for fire or EMS response.
- Superintendent/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/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: (examples include the Red Cross, fire department, police, private industry, private individuals, religious organizations and others).

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

The Pearl River UFSD has created a comprehensive list 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. Specific information in each of these categories is contained in the Building Level plans.

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

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

- The Building Principal of the affected facility shall contact the Superintendent or his/her designee and request the necessary manpower or resources.
- The Superintendent 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 Pearl River UFSD 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/Safety Team.
  - Make determination – Superintendent.
  - Contact local media – Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services.
- School Delay
  - Monitor any situation that may warrant school delay – Building Administrators/ Superintendent/Safety Team.
  - If conditions warrant, delay opening of school.
  - Contact Director of Operations and 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/Safety Team.
  - If conditions warrant, close school – Superintendent.
  - Contact Director of Operations and 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 or Designee.
  - Contact Director of Operations and Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation – Superintendent 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 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/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.

- Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Community Services prepares 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.

## **RECOVERY**

### **A. Central Administration Support for Buildings**

The Pearl River District Wide Safety Team will support the Building Level Emergency Response Team and the Crisis/Post-Incident Response Teams in affected schools.

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

The Central Office shall assist in the coordination of Disaster Mental Health Resources, in support of the Post-Incident Response Teams in the affected schools.

## **Appendix 1 – Required Plan Development Procedures**

Pearl River has revised the District Wide School Safety Plan in accordance with the 2013 New York School Safety Guide.

The District Wide Safety Team listed below contributed to revision of this plan. The plan was re-adopted by the board and was filed with the Commissioner of Education no later than 30 days after its adoption.

Please note the original plan was made available for public comment on August 21, 2001 and adopted by the board on October 2, 2001.

### **Committee Members – District Wide Safety Team**

- Marco Pochintesta, Superintendent of Schools (Chief Emergency Officer)
- Diana Musich, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Community Services
- Dr. Robert Roelle, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
- Kathleen Ryan, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Business
- Mary Cinelli, Coordinator of School Transportation
- Robert Nelan, Director of Facilities
- Maria Paese, Principal, Pearl River MS
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- Rebecca Massa, School Psychologist, Lincoln Avenue
- Roseanne Daly, RN, Evans Park Elementary School
- Mark Travaglino, Teacher, Pearl River MS
- Frank Shine, Facilities, Pearl River MS
- Members of Fire Districts
- Members of Law Enforcement
- Members of Emergency Medical Services

## Appendix 2 – Listing of all District Buildings

### Pearl River Building Names and Locations

#### **Pearl River High School**

275 East Central Ave  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **Pearl River Middle School**

520 Gilbert Avenue  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **Lincoln Avenue Elementary School**

115 Lincoln Ave  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **Franklin Avenue Elementary School**

48 Franklin Ave  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **Evans Park Elementary School**

40 Marion Place  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **PRSD District Administration Building**

135 West Crooked Hill Road  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **Nauraushaun Building** (Houses A Starting Place and serves as PRSD Facilities Depot)

664 Orangeburg Rd.  
Pearl River, NY 10965

#### **William St. Building** (Houses ARC)

37 Franklin Ave.  
Pearl River, NY 10965

Website Address

**<http://www.pearlriver.org>**



## Appendix 3 – 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 Pearl River 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 is 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 which 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. Youths 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, 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 relationships, 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, displays signs of paranoia, self-importance or grandiosity, masking feelings of unworthiness, notably thick 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, classwork, 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 extremist beliefs;
- Drugs and alcohol, knowledge of students' 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 their aftermath of such incidents.

## **Appendix 4 – Eleven Questions to Guide Data Collection in a Threat Assessment Inquiry**

### DOE and United States Secret Service Threat Assessment Guide

#### Eleven Key Areas

1) What are the student's motives and goals?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What motivated the student to make the statement or take action that caused him/her to come to attention?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the student have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the potential attacker feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternatives?</li> </ul>	
2) Has the student shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School attacks or attackers; weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon); incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murders). Ask about Columbine, Santana, etc.</li> </ul>	
3) Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What if anything has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written in a diary, journal, or website concerning his/her ideas and/or intentions?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have friends been alerted or "warned away"?</li> </ul>	
4) Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors? These behaviors might include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing an attack or plan</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casing or checking out, possible sites and areas for an attack</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehearsing attacks or ambushes</li> </ul>

5) Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does information from collateral interviews and from the student's own behavior confirm or dispute what the student says is going on?</li> </ul>	

6) Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How organized is the student's thinking and behavior?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the student have the means; e.g., access to a weapon, to carry out an attack?</li> </ul>	

7) Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation and/or despair?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss and/or loss of status?</li> </ul>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the student known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal or “accident-prone”?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the student engaged in behavior that suggests that he or she has considered ending their life?</li> </ul>

8) Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the student have at least one relationship with an adult where the student feels that he or she can confide in the adult and believes that the adult will listen without judging or jumping to conclusions? (Students with trusting relationships with adults may be directed away from violence and despair and toward hope.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the student emotionally connected to – or disconnected from – other students?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the student previously come to someone’s attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he or she needs intervention or supportive services?</li> </ul>

9) Are other people concerned about the student’s potential for violence?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are those who know the student concerned that he or she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are those who know the student concerned about a specific target?</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood or behavior?</li></ul>
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10) What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What factors in the students life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that the student will attempt to mount an attack at school?</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the response of other persons who know about the student's ideas or plan to mount an attack? (Do those who know about the student's ideas actively discourage the student from acting violently, encourage the student to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with an attack, etc.?)</li></ul>
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11) Does the student see violence as an acceptable – or desirable – or the only – way to solve problems?	
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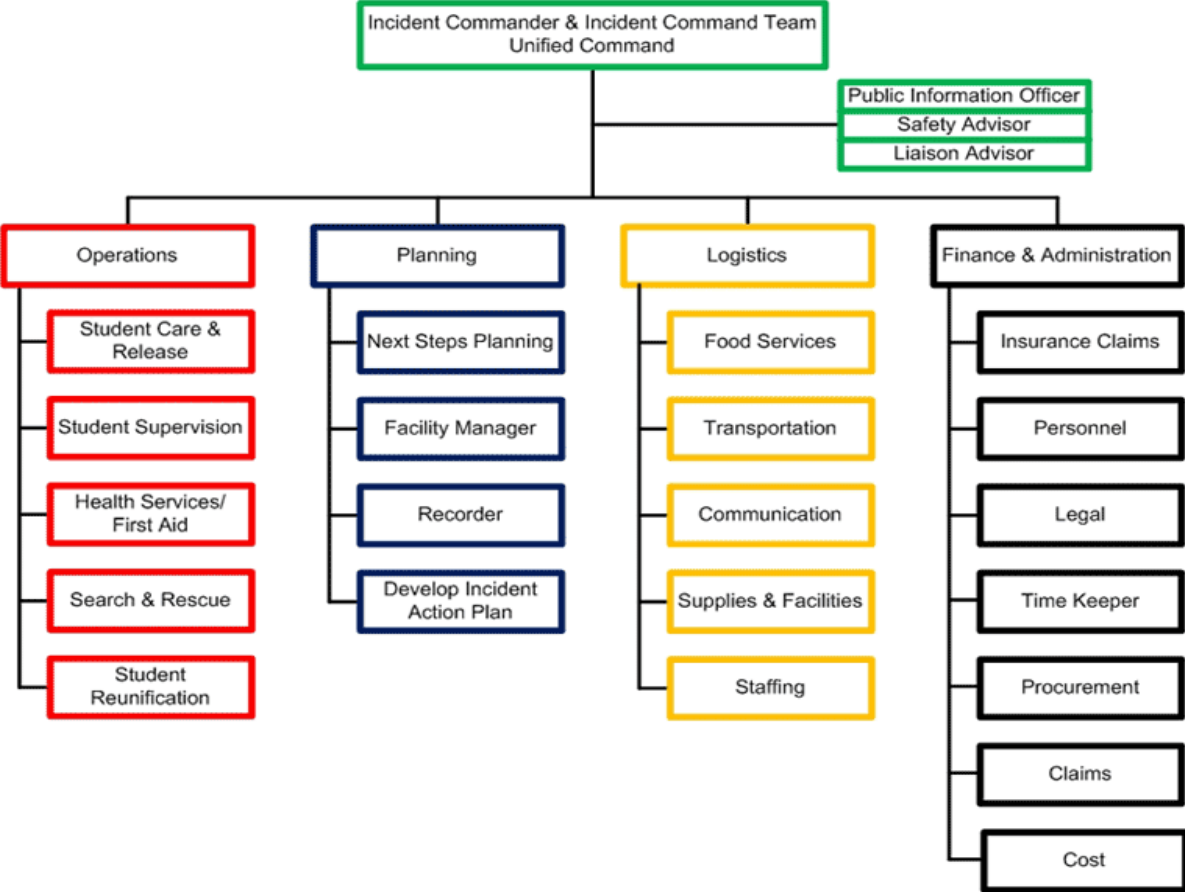
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has the student been “dared” by others to engage in an act of violence?</li></ul>
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**Appendix 5 – Incident Command System Organizational Chart Template**



**PEARL RIVER INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM ORGANIZATION**

Title	Person Holding Position	Description of Duties
Incident Commander	Mr. Marco Pochintesta	Person in charge at the incident and who is fully qualified to manage the incident. Sets objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident.
Operations Section Chief	Ms. Kathleen Ryan	Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan and directs all resources.
Planning Section Chief/Chief Emergency Officer	Dr. Robert Roelle	Develops the action plan to accomplish the objectives and maintains resource status.
Logistics Section Chief	Ms. Kathleen Ryan	Provides support to meet incident needs.
Finance/Administration Section Chief	Ms. Kathleen Ryan	Monitors costs related to incident. Provides accounting, procurement and cost analysis.
Director of Communications & Governmental Relations	Ms. Diana Musich	Point of contact for the media and other organizations seeking information.
Safety Officer	Mr. Robert Nelan	Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for ensuring the safety of personnel.

**Appendix 6 – Local Resources and Telephone Numbers**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>	<b>Contact Name (if applicable) and Address</b>
Nyack Hospital	845-348-2000	160 N Midland Ave, Nyack, NY 10960
Good Samaritan Hospital of Suffern	845-368-5000	255 Lafayette Ave, Suffern, NY 10901
Orangetown Police Department	845-359-3700	Town Hall, Orangeburg N.Y. 10962
Rockland County Sheriff's Department	845-638-5401	53 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY 10956
New York State Police	845-353-1100	8 Thiells Mount Ivy Road, Pomona, NY 10970
Pearl River Fire Department	911	
Rockland County Department of Mental Health	845-364-2378	Sanatorium Road, Pomona, NY 10970
Rockland County Emergency Medical Services	911 or 845-364-8922	35 Fireman's Memorial Drive, Pomona, NY 10970
Rockland County Environmental Health	845-364-2608	
Rockland County Public Health Social Work	845-364-2620	
Department of Mental Health Crisis Service	845-364-2200	24 hours/7 days a week
Department of Mental Health Suicide Hot Line	845-364-6500	
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222	
NYS Emergency Management Office	Warning Point 457- 2200 Office 457-2222 Fax 457-9930	
Statewide School Health Services Center	Office 716-349- 7632 Fax 716-352-9131	
American Red Cross	1-800-733-2767	
American Red Cross of Rockland County Chapter	1-800-272-4290	143 North Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960
Center for Disease Control	1-800-311-3435	

	1-404-639-3311	
NYS DEC Spill Hotline	1-800-457-7362	
Verizon	1-800-722-2300	
Orange and Rockland Utilities (Rockland Electric Company and Pike County Light and Power Co)	1-877-434-4100 1-800-533-5325 1-877-434-4100	Customer Service Gas Emergency Hot Line Power Outage
NYS Crime Victims Board	518-485-5719	Christina Hernandez

**Appendix 7 – Authorization For Student Pick-Up**

Upon evacuation of the building, emergency cards will be taken. Students will only be released to parents or guardians as designated on the emergency cards. Parents and/or guardians will be asked to sign the following log sheet when students are released:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Grades being released: \_\_\_\_\_

School Employee monitoring release: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Administrator authorizing release:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Released To</b>	<b>Signature</b>