

# School Emergency Response Plans

Schools Against Violence in Education

Revised - 2016

# Learning Objectives

- › Participants will learn the following:
  - Content of New York State Schools' Emergency Response Plans
  - Procedures to be followed during times of emergency
  - Factors that influence violence and safety in schools

# Emergency Response Plan Content

- The Basic Plan

- ✦ Standardizes language and provides structured framework for schools statewide.

- Functional Annexes

- ✦ Focus on critical operational functions and the courses of action developed to carry them out.
- ✦ To ensure consistency, standardized definitions and suggested best practices have been provided: *Shelter-In-Place, Hold-In-Place, Evacuation, Lockout and Lockdown*.

- Threat/Hazard Specific Annexes

- ✦ Actions and best practices outlined in detail on what to do in the event of various emergencies.
- ✦ Identification of specific threats/hazards specific to each building.

- Appendices

- ✦ Appropriate floor plans for each building and current information about school response team members, students and staff with special needs and any other information critical to each building.
- ✦ Identification of appropriate staff to fill specific roles related to incident command and response teams.

# The Basic Plan

- › Plan development and maintenance with a listing of Building Level team members
- › Distribution of the plan to State Police, local fire department and law enforcement, and other relevant agencies
- › Plan review and revision
- › Sites and types of emergencies with annexes
- › Organization and assignment of responsibilities

# The Basic Plan

- › Direction, control, and coordination – School Incident Command System
- › Coordination of resources
- › Requirements for training and drilling

# Appendices

- › Additional appendices with names, numbers locations, etc, shall include:
  - Communications (specific names and numbers)
  - Incident Command System (ICS)
  - Emergency Response Teams
  - Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)
  - Master Class Schedule
  - Building/Grounds/Local Road Maps
  - Student/Staff with Special Needs

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## Pearl River School District

### Lockout

Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.

1. Listen for instructions regarding the situation and your actions.
2. Lock all exterior windows.
3. Leave blinds/lights as they are.
4. Take Attendance.
5. After initial instructions listen for updates.
6. Classroom instruction continues as normal.
7. All outdoor activities are terminated.
8. Listen for updates.

### Hold-In-Place

Used to limit movement of students and staff while dealing with short term emergencies.

1. Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions.
2. Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible.
3. Classroom teachers, take attendance.
4. All other staff assist students, as needed.
5. Listen for updates.

### Evacuate

Used to evacuate students and staff from the building.

1. Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions.
2. Lead students to designated assembly or announced assembly area. Use secondary route, if necessary.
3. Bring attendance list and class roster.
4. Close the classroom door after exiting.
5. Take attendance when safe to do so.
6. If evacuating off site, take attendance before moving from and upon arrival at off site location.
7. Listen for Updates.

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## Pearl River School District

### Shelter-In-Place

Used to shelter students and staff inside the building.

1. Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions.
2. Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible.
3. Classroom teachers, take attendance.
4. All other staff assist students, as needed.
5. Move away from windows, if situation warrants.
6. If instructed, move out of classroom to designated safe area. Stay together at all times.
7. Take Attendance.
8. Listen for updates.

### Lockdown

Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.

1. When you hear lockdown announced, you should move quickly to execute the following actions.
2. If safe, gather students from hallways and common areas near your classroom.
3. Lock your door. Barricade if necessary.
4. Move students to a safe area in the classroom out of site of the door.
5. Leave windows, blinds/lights as they are.
6. Keep everyone quiet, silence cell phones.
7. Take attendance, if possible.
8. Do not communicate through door or answer room phone.
9. Do not respond to P.A. announcements or fire alarm.
10. Stay hidden until physically released by law enforcement personnel.



# Shelter-In-Place

## › Purpose

- Describes courses of action when students and staff are required to remain indoors because it is safer inside the building than outside.
- Depending on the threat, students and staff may be required to move to rooms that can be sealed (chemical or biological hazard) or rooms without windows (weather hazard).

## › Action

- Shelter-in-Place will be announced by intercom, public address system or otherwise with instructions on how to proceed (DO NOT USE CODES or COLORS).

# Shelter-In-Place

- **Instructions** - Use clear, concise language to provide direction to the school based on the situation.
  - YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE
  - THERE IS A SITUATION REQUIRING YOU TO SHELTER-IN-PLACE
  - PLEASE STOP WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS
  - Provide specific incident instructions
  
- **Additional Considerations for Procedures:**
  - Turn off utilities and ventilation systems (heating, ventilation and air conditioning)
  - Prepare to shelter-in-place for extended periods including arrangements for food/water, sleeping, hygiene, medical needs, etc.
  - Notify all concerned parties when the Shelter-In-Place is lifted.

# Hold-In-Place

## › Purpose

- Intended to keep students and staff out of the affected area until the situation can be rectified, i.e., internal incident or administrative matter such as students fighting in a hallway, a maintenance issue or medical emergency.

## › Action

- Hold-In-Place will be announced by intercom, public address system, or otherwise with instructions on how to proceed (DO NOT USE CODES or COLORS).

# Hold-In-Place

- **Instructions** - Use clear, concise language to provide direction to the school based on the situation.
  - YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE
  - THERE IS A SITUATION REQUIRING YOU TO HOLD-IN-PLACE
  - PLEASE STOP WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS
  - Provide specific incident instructions
- **Additional Considerations**
  - If a Hold-In-Place is announced between class periods, students will return to their previous class to await instructions.
  - If the route is blocked, students will go to the nearest classroom and advise the teacher that they are unable to get to their class and await instructions.
  - All available staff members will assist in maintaining order and accounting for students.

# Evacuation

## › Purpose

- Describes the courses of action that the school will execute to evacuate school buildings and grounds. Describes courses of action when students and staff are required to vacate the buildings or grounds because it is safer outside the building than inside (fire, explosion, etc.).
- Includes school policies and procedures for on-site and off-site evacuation including evacuation routes, transportation needs, and sheltering sites.

## › Action

- Communicate the need to evacuate the building or a specific area of the building to the building staff and other occupants by activating the fire alarm and/or by a Public Address (P.A.) System or bullhorn.

# Evacuation

- › **Instructions** - Use clear, concise language to provide direction to the school based on the situation.
  - YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE
  - WE NEED TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING
  - TEACHERS ARE TO TAKE THEIR STUDENTS TO THEIR DESIGNATED ASSEMBLY AREA
  - TEACHERS TAKE YOUR CLASS ROSTER
  - TAKE ATTENDANCE WHEN SAFE TO DO SO
  
- › **Additional Considerations**
  - 911 should be notified immediately
  - Notify appropriate district staff that an evacuation has occurred
  - Designate staff with assigned radios and/or cell phones to assist
  - Communicate when it is safe to re-enter the building or a section of the school by radio transmission, public address system, designated staff, or bull horn

# Evacuation

## › Evacuation – Building Only

- Determine evacuation routes based on location of the incident and type of emergency
- Ensure all locations have designated secondary escape routes
- Evacuate students/staff with special needs, use designated Areas of Refuge, if necessary
- Do NOT stop for belongings
- Take class roster, phone lists, first-aid kit and other emergency supplies with you
- Check the bathrooms, hallways and common areas for visitors, staff or students while exiting
- Go to designated evacuation assembly area
- Account for all students – immediately report any missing or injured students to the Incident Commander
- Take visitor log and student sign out sheet to evacuation assembly area

# Evacuation

## › Evacuation – Off School Grounds

- Perform all evacuation steps as indicated for a building evacuation
- Proceed to off-site location
- The method by which students/staff will get to the offsite location (walk, bus, etc)

## › Return to Buildings or Grounds

- No students or staff shall return to the school buildings or grounds until advised to do so by the Incident Commander or appropriate officials
- In the event that emergency response services (Police, Fire, EMS) are called, the Incident Commander may transfer incident command to the appropriate authority, who will then make the decision to allow students and staff to return to the building



# Lockout

## › Purpose

- Describes the courses of action the school will execute to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.
- The primary objective is to quickly ensure all school staff, students, and visitors are secured in the school building away from the outside danger.

## › Actions – Initiate Lockout

- YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE
- THERE IS A SITUATION REQUIRING THE SCHOOL TO LOCKOUT
- ALL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED
- PLEASE CONTINUE REGULARLY SCHEDULED INDOOR ACTIVITIES

# Lockout

## › Execute Lockout

- All outdoor activities shall cease and be immediately moved indoors (i.e., gym classes, playground, etc.)
- As soon as all students and staff are in the building all exterior doors shall be locked
- Normal activities will continue within the building
- It is not necessary to turn lights off or to close binds (unless directed to do so)
- Do not respond to the fire alarm unless actual signs of fire are observed
- Report any suspicious activity observed either indoors or outdoors to the main office
- A lockout will be lifted when notification is made by administration

# Lockdown

- Purpose

- Describes the courses of action schools will execute to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.
- The primary objective is to quickly ensure all school staff, students and visitors are secured in rooms away from immediate danger.
- A lockdown is the initial physical response to provide a time barrier during an active shooter/intruder event.
- Lockdown is not a stand-alone defensive strategy. Executing a Lockdown should involve barricading the door, hiding from view, remaining silent and readying a plan of evacuation as a last resort.

- Actions

- When possible a Lockdown will be announced by intercom, Public Address (P.A.) System, or otherwise (DO NOT USE CODES or COLORS).
- 911 should be called immediately.
- In events where an immediate threat to life safety is recognized (such as a person armed with a gun in the hallway) any faculty or staff shall raise the alarm and initiate a lockdown.

# Lockdown

- › Initiate Lockdown – anyone can call a lockdown
  - **LOCKDOWN! LOCKDOWN! LOCKDOWN!**
- › Execute Lockdown
  - IF SAFE, immediately gather students from hallways and areas near your room into classroom or office. This includes common areas and restrooms immediately adjacent to your classroom.
  - Lock your door(s) and have students/staff move to the designated safe area of the room, **\*\*REMAIN SILENT\*\***
  - **Leave lights on and blinds as they are. Do not cover door windows.**
  - Staff/students participating in any outdoor activity upon the initiation of a lockdown should seek a safe location away from the building.
  - Call 911 and report your situation including location and number of students.
  - Procedures should be in place to re-direct buses in the event of a lockdown

# Lockdown

## › Execute Lockdown – continued

- Teachers should position themselves in a location that gives them an advantage to manage their classroom effectively, and take the following actions during a lockdown:
  - › Do not allow anyone, under any circumstance, to leave your secured area
  - › Do not answer or communicate through your door or classroom phone
  - › Silence cell phones and limit use to only relay pertinent information to 911 (i.e., description/location of active shooter/injured victims)
  - › Do not respond to fire alarm unless actual signs of fire are observed
  - › Document and attend to any injuries to the best of your ability
  - › Take attendance and include additional students and missing students' last known location
  - › Do not respond to Public Address (P.A.) system or other announcements

# Lockdown

- Execute Lockdown – continued
  - If an intruder enters the classroom, use WHATEVER means necessary to protect yourself and the students. You must be prepared to fight for your life and use physical force or deadly force to stop the intruder
  - Potential tactics include:
    - Moving about the room to lessen accuracy
    - Throwing items (books, computers, phones, etc.) to create confusion
    - Assaulting the shooter/intruder – use whatever objects you have in the classroom as a weapon such as blunt force objects (fire extinguisher, chairs, etc.) to incapacitate the intruder – FIGHT!
- **LOCKDOWN WILL ONLY END WHEN YOU ARE PHYSICALLY RELEASED FROM YOUR ROOM OR SECURED AREA BY LAW ENFORCEMENT**

# Mental Health and Workplace Violence Prevention

- › Acts of school violence are rarely impulsive.
- › According to the FBI warning behaviors called “leakage” by students is one of the strongest clues prefacing a violent act.
- › Often other students were involved or aware in some capacity.

# Mental Health and Workplace Violence Prevention

- › Let's be careful here. Mental illness takes many forms and does not necessarily predispose an individual to violence.
- › There is no clear profile of an individual who commits acts of violence against schools.
- › However there are factors that seem to be common.



# Mental Health and Workplace Violence Prevention

Common factors include:

- › Attackers are often young males.
- › Lacking social bonds, a key indicator
- › Having access to weapons
- › Having easy and unmonitored access to media with themes of extreme violence
- › Peer group intensively and exclusively fascinated with violence.
- › Having often been the targets of bullying
- › Often having struggled with lack of success and managing failure

# Mental Health and Workplace Violence Prevention

- › Regardless, students who display characteristics of mental illness, or factors associated with poor social integration may need help.
- › The school has resources, school psychologists, guidance counselors, and social workers should be consulted.
- › If you see something, say something. The history of bystanders is well documented. Concerns have often been raised about attackers prior to an act of violence.

# Mental Health and Workplace Violence Prevention

- › When faculty or staff have a concern for a student's safety as a result of observations or of "leakage" by the student, assessment of the facts is critical. Administration and professionals need to be involved and engaged.
- › "Leakage" could be characterized as clues revealed by a student of feelings, thoughts, fantasies, or attitudes. These clues may include: threats, predictions, and can be expressed in many forms e.g.(Diaries, letters, videos).

# What Every Teacher Needs to Know About Suicide Prevention

- › Suicide is Preventable
- › It isn't your job to solve the problem – it's simply to get this student help
- › Suicide risk doesn't disappear once an intervention is made so keep your eyes open
- › Help-seeking is called a protective factor, the kind of thing that can be a buffer from life stressors

# Suicide Prevention

- › Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for young people in New York State. \*
- › There has been a dramatic rise in the suicide attempt rate for 10 to 14 year olds. \*
- › The majority of those students who are thinking about suicide show direct or indirect warning signs. These are things that reflect a change in the student's behavior from as little as two weeks ago.

\* NYS Office of Mental Health

# Suicide Prevention – Warning Signs

- › If you notice any of these warning signs, take action
  - **Feelings** like expressing hopelessness, seeming sad and unhappy, being anxious or worried, or getting angry and aggressive
  - **Actions** like withdrawing from activities or friendships, doing risky, dangerous things, or researching ways to die online
  - **Changes** in the normal mood and behavior of the student, if you see changes that concern you reach out to others in the student's life to see if they have also noticed changes

# Suicide Prevention – Warning Signs

- › Additional warning signs to look out for:
  - **Threats** are sometimes direct “I’d rather be dead”, but can also be vague like “I just don’t care about anything anymore”
  - **Situations** are events that can serve as triggers for suicidal behavior. These can include things like getting into trouble at home or school, or with the law, experiencing some kind of loss or facing a life change that may be too overwhelming for the student to deal with on their own.

# What does it take to be a trusted adult to a student?

## › **Here's how students describe it:**

- › Making time to talk, even if your schedule is tight
- › Taking my concerns seriously, no matter how trivial they seem
- › Not telling me it will be better tomorrow
- › LISTENING! Recognizing you probably can't fix what I'm worried about but just listening to me talk about it can help
- › Being honest if you think you have to tell someone else about my problem
- › Taking action when it's necessary
- › Remembering what we talked about and asking me about it later



# Suicide Prevention

- › Your school district has a policy and a procedure for managing threats of self-harm, including suicide, and also notifying persons in parental relationship of implied or direct threats.
- › Ask your supervisor or guidance counselor, social worker, or psychologist how this process works in your school building.