

Schodack Central School District District Wide School Safety Plan

**1477 South Schodack Road,
Castleton-On-Hudson, NY 12033**

2018-2019

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**Schodack CSD
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. School Districts are required to develop a District Wide School Safety Plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious, violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of schools with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies.

The District Wide 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.

Schodack CSD supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The District Superintendent of Schodack encourages and advocates on-going cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Philosophy and Goals

It is the policy of the Schodack Central School District to provide for a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for its students, staff and school community. This policy shall be implemented through the following means:

- Development of a detailed school safety plan for the District and each building in the District.
- Establishment and implementation of policies for responding to threats of violence concerning school district property, facilities and premises.
- Establishment and implementation of policies for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, administrators, staff or visitors. This may include a zero tolerance policy in some cases of violence in our schools.
- Development and delivery of prevention and intervention strategies for students manifesting at-risk behaviors.
- Development and adoption of policies and procedures for contacting law enforcement officials and parents in the event of a violent incident.
- Establishment and implementation of policies and procedures for school building security and training of students and staff in school security.

- Development and adoption of protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage situations, intrusions and kidnappings.
- Development and implementation of strategies to improve communication regarding the reporting of violent incidents.

B. Purpose

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

C. Identification of School Teams

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

- Matt LaClair, Director of Facilities / Designee
- Elise Britt, Athletic Director
- Len Bacon, Chemical Hygiene Officer / High School Faculty Member
- Michael Bennett, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration
- Heather Brewer, Elementary School Registered Nurse
- Christine Charsky, Elementary School Faculty Member
- Jamie Colloton, Elementary School Faculty Member
- Elizabeth Croft, High School Registered Nurse
- Kolby Flach, High School Faculty Member, Physical Education
- Rhonda Greenway, Transportation Supervisor
- Jill Hanrahan, Curriculum Secretary
- Scott Hanrahan, High School Faculty Member
- Amy Hirschhoff, Elementary School Faculty Member
- Michael Hiser, SCSD Board Member
- Regina Maier, Elementary School Secretary
- Amy McGarvey-Roe, Elementary School Faculty/Staff Member
- Lisa Smith-Auer, Facilities Secretary
- Jodi Sullivan, Assistant Principal, Grades 7-12
- Michael Tuttle, SCSD Board Member

D. Concept of Operations

- The District-wide 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 Response Plan and District Wide Response Team.
- The District-wide School Safety Plan was developed through extensive analysis of the local environment, emergency potential, and available resources. Through training and workshops that included school employees, administration and local emergency services, the plan has been developed to address the specific needs of Schodack 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 District Superintendent or the highest ranking person in the chain of command of any necessary building level plan activation. This notification shall be accomplished through the use of telephone or other communication method.
- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the District 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's 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.

E. 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's Board of Education shall adopt the District-wide 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 District-wide 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 on or before September 1 of each year after 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
- District Code of Conduct
- S.A.D.D.
- Peer Mediation.
- Pre-Prom Assemblies on Drugs and Alcohol involving fire, police and emergency medical services.
- Social Workers and Psychologist available to assist students.

- Campfeld Productions, presentations on bullying, drugs and decision making.
- Group 551, education on decision making.
- Individual classroom programs on respect.
- Weekly advisory team meetings between social workers, guidance counselors, building administrators, and health office staff to assist identifying students with needs.
- SPUD, Students Performing Unselfish Deeds.
- High School Spirit Week, focusing on self-respect, bullying and tolerance.
- Middle School "Word of Change" Anti-bullying, full day.
- Student Council Planned Activities, such as Hillstock, that integrates an anti-drug and alcohol message.

Facilities Initiatives

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

- The school district has developed a parent/visitor sign-in procedure and requires the use of visitor ID badges with visual contact.
- The district's staff uses faculty/staff ID badges.
- The district has developed a single point of access for visitors at each building.
- The district has added video cameras in strategic areas of the school buildings to monitor activities within the school buildings.
- The district implemented a data logging card access system for entry into the buildings.
- The district has purchased meshed style waste receptacles to replace solid ones.
- The district purchased self-extinguishing waste canisters.
- The district installed a new fire sprinkler system in the new wing of CES.
- The district installed co detectors in all areas required.
- The district enhanced the fire alarm systems for the bus garage
- The district restructured the Junior/ Senior High school parking lot.
- The district created a separate bus and parent drop off at the elementary school.
- The district installed sprinklers in the renovated areas of the Junior/ Senior High School
- The district installed speed bumps at the CES parent drop off

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 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.
- The District shall conduct drills and other exercises to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the District's Emergency Response Plan. Each building principal will forward a schedule of planned emergency drills and fire drills to the District Superintendent by the beginning of each school year. Each principal will be required to complete a minimum number of student drills as follows:

Eight (8) fire/evacuation drills
Four (4) lockdown drills

Eight of these drills 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, violence prevention, mental health, 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.
- In the event of any student making a direct or indirect threat of violence against themselves, the school district shall respond in an appropriate manner.

Chief Emergency Officer

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 District 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, non-instructional and transportation personnel.
- Reference checks are completed and reviewed by the administrative team along with the application.
- Prior to making a job offer to a prospective employee, the following mandatory questions are asked during reference checks with immediate and/or past supervisors:
 - Do you have knowledge of any violations of safety or security by (prospective employee) related to students, employees or others?
 - Why did (prospective employee) leave your employment? Or, do you know why (prospective employee) is leaving your employment?
 - Would you rehire (prospective employee)? If no, why not?

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The District has implemented policies and procedures related to the early detection of potentially violent behaviors. 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’s 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:

Building	Employees	Students
Maple Hill Junior/Senior High School Telephone: 518-732-7701 Principal: Jacqueline Hill	82	382
Castleton Elementary School Telephone: 518-732-7755 Principal: James Derby	62	481
Transportation Office Telephone: 518-732-2070 Trans. Supervisor: Rhonda Greenway	26	0
Schodack District Office Building Telephone: 518-732-2297 Superintendent: Jason Chevrier	16	0

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

The Schodack Central School District recognizes the following locations within its facilities as sites of potential emergency or injury:

- Castleton Elementary School Playground
- Castleton Elementary School Gymnasiums
- Schodack District Office Building Playground
- Schodack District Office Building Athletic Fields
- Schodack District Office Building Gymnasium and Climbing Wall
- Maple Hill High School Athletic Fields
- Maple Hill High School Track
- Maple Hill High School Gymnasium
- Maple Hill High School Multi-Use Facility (MUF)
- Maple Hill High School Chemistry Labs
- Maple Hill High School Auditorium
- Outside grounds of all three school buildings (located on traveled roadways)

Bus garage facility (located adjacent to the Maple Hill Middle School with school bus travel to and from the bus garage site)

Off-Site Field Trips

Railroad Tracks Located Within Walking Distance of School District Property

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. <u>All Administrators are authorized by the District 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>
Teachers and Building staff	Public address system and radios.
Students	Public address system and verbally from supervising teachers
District Superintendent	Public address system and radios.
Buildings and Grounds	Public address system and radios.
Board of Education	Phone

External

New York State Police:	911
Town P.D.	911
Sheriff's Office	911
Fire Department	911
Parents	District Website: www.schodack.k12.ny.us Transportation Phone Emergency Information: Rhonda Greenway, 518-732-2070 The district will also utilize local radio frequency and Radio Stations:

The District Communication Specialist would be responsible for conveying emergency information to educational facilities within the SCHODACK CSD. The District Communication Specialist 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 District Communication Specialist. Each such agency would report material changes to such data to the District Communication Specialist, 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 telephone 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 Director of Communications or 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 District Superintendent will ensure the Building Level team has adequate resources to respond to the emergency.
- The District Communication Specialist will develop a public information strategy to communicate necessary information to the media, parents and staff.
- The District Superintendent will notify appropriate Board of Education members of the incident.
- The District 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

Schodack has 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 District 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.)

Chain of Command

- 1) District Superintendent
- 2) Assistant Superintendent for Assistant Superintendent for School Administration
- 3) Director of Business and Support Services
- 4) Building Principals

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

Schodack 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 District Superintendent or his/her designee and request the necessary manpower or resources.
- The District 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

Schodack 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 Director of Communications & Governmental Relations.
- School Delay
 - Monitor any situation that may warrant school delay – Building Administrators/ Superintendent/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, delay opening of school.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to coordinate transportation issues.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of delayed opening.
 - Set up information center so that parents may make inquiries as to situation.
 - Provide for safety and security of employees and students who do come to school.
- Early Dismissal
 - Monitor situation – Superintendent/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, close school – Superintendent.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal.
 - Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation.
 - Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.
- Evacuation (before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes)
 - Determine the level of threat – Superintendent or Designee.
 - Contact 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.
 - Establish a Director of Communications to provide information and current status of the situation to parents and other inquiring parties.

- Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.

RECOVERY

A. Central Administration Support for Buildings

The Schodack District Wide School 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

Schodack has revised the District Wide School Safety Plan in accordance with the 2016 New York Emergency Response Guide.

The District Wide Safety & Health 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 7/2/2018 and adopted by the board on 8/9/2018.

Committee Members – District Wide Safety & Health Team

- Matt LaClair, Director of Facilities / Designee
- Elise Britt, Athletic Director
- Len Bacon, Chemical Hygiene Officer / High School Faculty Member
- Michael Bennett, Assistant Superintendent for School Administration
- Heather Brewer, Elementary School Registered Nurse
- Christine Charsky, Elementary School Faculty Member
- Jamie Colloton, Elementary School Faculty Member
- Elizabeth Croft, High School Registered Nurse
- Kolby Flach, High School Faculty Member, Physical Education
- Rhonda Greenway, Transportation Supervisor
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- Jodi Sullivan, Assistant Principal, Grades 7-12
- Michael Tuttle, SCSD Board Member

Appendix 2 – Listing of all District Buildings

Schodack CSD serves a student population of approximately 862, covering a 34 square mile radius. Within Schodack there are 194 employees, who serve a variety of functions in the development and education of the entire district's student body.

Schodack Building Names and Locations

Castleton Elementary School

80 Scott Ave, Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033

518-732-7755

James Derby, Principal

Schodack District Office Building

1477 South Schodack Road, Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033

518-732-7736

Jason Chevrier Superintendent

Maple Hill High School

1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033

518-732-7701

Jacqueline Hill, Principal

District Communications

Jason McCord

Communication Specialist

518-248-1345

School Website

www.Schodack.k12.ny.us

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 Schodack CSD 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"> What motivated the student to make the statement or take action that caused him/her to come to attention? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the student have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? 	
2) Has the student shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
3) Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have friends been alerted or “warned away”? 	
4) Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors? These behaviors might include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing an attack or plan 	

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

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

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

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

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

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the student emotionally connected to – or disconnected from – other students?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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?

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

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood or behavior?
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10) What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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?
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.?)
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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">• 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?
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has the student been “dared” by others to engage in an act of violence?

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Appendix 5 – Incident Command System Organizational Chart Template

SCHODACK INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM ORGANIZATION

Title	Person Holding Position	Description of Duties
Incident Commander	Building Principal	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.
District Superintendent	Jason Chevrier	Develops the action plan to accomplish the objectives and maintains resource status.
Assistant Superintendent for School Administration	Mike Bennett	Provides support to meet incident needs.
Director of Business & Support Service	Brian Carey	Monitors costs related to incident. Provides accounting, procurement and cost analysis.
Communications Specialist	Jason McCord	Point of contact for the media and other organizations seeking information.
Safety Officer	Matt La Clair	Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for ensuring the safety of personnel.

SCHODACK Chain of Command

(Please Note: The chain of command is different from the Incident Command Structure)

- This chain of command is meant to be a hierarchy for decision-making for normal day to day activities, not for emergencies. Should a crisis arise, the highest-ranking person in the below chain shall implement the incident command structure (ICS) on the previous page. If emergency services are necessary, the district will integrate their ICS with the municipalities ICS.

Name	Title	Office #	Home #	Cell #
Jason Chevrier	District Superintendent	518-732-2292	518-336-4049	518-256-8105
Mike Bennett	Assistant Superintendent for School Administration	518-732-7701	518-732-0322	518-421-4520
Brian Carey	Director of Business and Support Services	518-732-2124		518-391-8117

Appendix 7 – Alternative Pickup Locations For District Buses

The following locations are alternative sites for Schodack CSD buses to pick up students and/or employees. These locations will only be used in the event that the buses cannot access a district campus (i.e., due to a lockdown or police activity). These alternatives were reviewed by the Schodack Director of Transportation.

<u>Primary Loading Site</u>	<u>Possible Alternative Loading Site</u>
Castleton Elementary School	1. Schodack District Office Building
	2. Maple Hill Junior/ Senior High School
	3. Castle Hill
Schodack District Office Building	1. Maple Hill Junior/Senior High School
	2. Bus Garage
	3. Castleton Elementary School
Maple Hill Junior/Senior High School	1. Schodack District Office Building
	2. Bus Garage
	3. Castleton Elementary School

Appendix 8: Violence Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Violence Prevention Policies and Procedures

It is the intent of the board of education that the district engage in: collaborative arrangements with state and local law enforcement officials to ensure adequate training for school district staff in violence prevention and de-escalation; anonymous reporting procedures for reporting school violence, non-violent conflict resolution training programs and the development of a violence prevention curriculum as a means to prevent violence. The following policies and procedures shall be in effect to facilitate the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to identification of family, community, and persons deemed appropriate to receive such information.

1. Annual review and adoption of codes of conduct for students, employees and visitors to school premises. These codes of conduct shall include enforceable rules; clear consequences; due process; and explicitly defines roles, rights and responsibilities of the parties.
2. All district staff and students will receive multi-hazard school safety training on an annual basis in accordance with Commissioner's Regulations 155.17.
3. The utility of extended school day programs as a means of addressing the needs of district students at risk for violent behavior shall be assessed annually by the superintendent who shall provide a report concerning the status of such programs and recommendations for improvement to the board of education by *July 1* of each year. **(Mandated)**
4. Annual adoption and review of a school dress code to prohibit appearance, clothing and accessories that disrupt the educational process. **(Mandated)**
5. Staff development is a critical element in the prevention of violence in our schools. Teachers shall be offered training opportunities in the knowledge and skill required to address school violence and victimization, most notably bullying. Additionally, staff shall be trained in sexual, racial and other forms of harassment, cultural diversity, school security and disciplinary policies, classroom management, crowd control and intervention strategies. This shall include training in de-escalation of potentially violent situations. All district staff and students will receive multi-hazard school safety training on an annual basis as described in Section XIV, Training and Staff Development. **(Mandated)**
6. Adoption of an in-school suspension program that incorporates counseling services to address the underlying causes of student misbehavior.
7. Implementation of conflict resolution programs in schools.
8. Implementation of character based education. **(Mandated)**

Reporting Early Warning Signs

In the event students and staff observe a student manifesting early warning signs, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Contact the school principal to report the information about the student manifesting such signs.
2. Principals shall maintain a record of each such report.

3. In cases that do not pose imminent danger, the principal or counselor should contact a school psychologist or other qualified professional, who takes immediate action to address the situation.
4. The child's family should be contacted. The family should be consulted before implementing any interventions with the child.
5. In cases where school-based contextual factors are determined to be causing or exacerbating the child's troubling behavior, the school should act quickly to modify them.
6. It is important to avoid inappropriately labeling or stigmatizing individual students because they appear to fit a specific profile or set of early warning indicators. 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.

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.

Upon receipt or discovery of a threat, the school principal or a designee shall immediately commence an investigation in an effort to identify the person who made the threat.

The following factors must be considered in assessing a threat:

1. What are the specific, plausible details of the threat?
2. Identity of the victim(s).
3. Reason for making the threat.
4. The means (weapon) and method for carrying it out.
5. The date, time and place for carrying it out.
6. Any concrete information about plans or preparations already in place.
7. Are the details logical and plausible or unrealistic.
8. What is the emotional content of the threat (emotionally charged or not).

9. Is there any evidence of precipitating stressors that brought on the threat.

Specific details can be a manifestation of a high level of planning and thought and should heighten concern. Lack of detail may indicate that the threatener has not actually taken steps to carry it out.

Levels of Risk:

Low Level of Threat: A threat that poses a minimal risk to the victim and public safety:

- Threat is vague and indirect.
- Information in the threat is not consistent, is implausible or is vague.
- The threat lacks realism.
- Content of threat suggests person is unlikely to carry it out.

Medium Level of Threat: A threat that could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic:

- Threat is more direct and more concrete.
- Content of threat suggests the threatener has given thought to means and method.
- There is a general indication of possible place and time (though plan is not detailed).
- There is no strong indication of preparatory steps.
- There may be a specific statement seeking to convey the seriousness of the threat.

High Level of Threat: A threat that appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others:

- Threat is direct, specific and plausible.
- Content of threat suggests that concrete, specific steps have been taken to implement it.

Responding to Threats:

Our schools are learning environments that are threat free. To establish and maintain safe and secure schools, we will each:

- Care for ourselves
- Extend care to others
- Take care of our school

The following procedures will be observed in the event of receipt of a threat or act of violence:

1. Any student, who receives a threat or hears or observes one being made, shall immediately notify a member of the staff, faculty or administration.
2. Any member of the staff or faculty who is informed of, or hears or observes a threat on another, or who receives a threat, shall immediately notify the building administrator.
3. Any building administrator who is informed of a threat, or hears or observes a threat on another, or who receives a threat, will conduct an immediate and thorough investigation of the matter. This will include conferences with those alleging that a threat was made and the individuals(s) who allegedly made such threat.
4. If after such investigation, it appears reasonably certain that the allegation is true; the building administrator will immediately consult with the school guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker and/or Instructional Support Team. These consultations may lead the building administrator to contact county agencies, including those concerned with mental health, social services and child protection. If necessary, arrangements will be made for an emergency mental health evaluation.
5. The building administrator will call the parents or guardians of all students involved in the incident.
6. Where a confirmed threat of violence has been made or an act of violence has been committed that is a violation of law, the building administrator shall be responsible for contacting the appropriate law enforcement agency/agencies.
7. The behavior of a student found to have made a threat will be addressed in accordance with the school code of conduct. If the student behavior is not proscribed by the code of conduct, the building administrator or Superintendent will take reasonable measures to provide an appropriate school response to the behavior consistent with federal, state and local due process requirements.

Acts of Violence

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. Follow building-level emergency protocols

4. Call to law enforcement if conditions warrant
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 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
- Building administrator contacts law enforcement as appropriate
- 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
- If needed, the student is referred to the Rensselaer County Diversion Unit
- If needed, a PINS petition is filed with Rensselaer County

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
 - k. What happened?
 - l. Where did it happen?
 - m. When did it happen?
 - n. Why did it happen?
 - o. How did it happen?
 - p. How many individuals were involved?
 - q. Are the individuals associated with a group?
 - r. How could the incident have been prevented?
 - s. What warning signs were missed?
 - t. 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

D. Dissemination of Information Regarding Violence

The dissemination of information regarding violence may take any or all of the following forms:

1. Training and staff development sessions for staff
2. Scheduled and unscheduled meetings among administrators and staff

3. Building level assemblies for students during the school year
4. Conflict resolution teams at the Middle School and High School
5. Teacher instruction as appropriate to the curriculum
6. Newsletter communication to parents, staff and community
7. Seminars and other forums designed for parents

E. Reporting of Violent Incidents

The following district level reporting procedures shall be implemented upon receipt of a threat or the occurrence of a violent incident:

1. All bomb threats, civil disturbances, intrusions, hostage-takings, kidnappings or other threatening events will immediately be reported to the appropriate police authority by the building principal as necessary.
2. The building principal is responsible for reporting the threat or violent incident to the superintendent.
3. If it is determined that parental notification is necessary, building level staff will contact parents using the Parental Notification Lists.
4. The Superintendent/designee shall contact the Board of Education and the media as appropriate.
5. The Superintendent/designee will report the incident to the State Education Department as required by completing the designated Violent and Disruptive Incidents Report (VADIR).
6. The Superintendent will maintain a file of pertinent information for all threats received by the district.