

Hartford Central School District
District-Wide Safety Plan



Introduction

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. New York State 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 the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The district-wide plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. Districts stand at risk from a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and manmade disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project Save is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses prevention response, and recovery, with respect to a variety of emergencies in each school district and its schools. The Warren-Washington-Saratoga-Hamilton-Essex BOCES, in coordination with the Hartford Central School District, supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of the Hartford Central School District encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines

- A. Purpose
 - The Hartford Central School District-wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.11. At the direction of the Hartford Central School District Board of Education, the Superintendent of Hartford Central School District appointed a District Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the District-wide School Safety Plan;
- B. Identification of School Teams
 - The Hartford Central School District has created a District Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, the Superintendent, the Building Principals, the Special Patrol Officer, the School Nurse, the Guidance Department, including the School Psychologist, student representatives, and other local or county safety personnel (i.e. Law Enforcement);
- C. Concept of Operations
 - The District-wide School Safety Plan shall be directly linked to the individual Building-level Emergency Response Plans for the Hartford Central School District. The protocols reflected in the District-wide School Safety Plan will guide the development and implementation of individual Building-level Emergency

Response Plans. The development of the District-wide safety plan was a collaborative effort involving members of the District Safety Team, law enforcement officials, county emergency service coordinators, and the Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Services. The plan was further developed utilizing the guidelines provided by the New York State Education Department;

- In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the District Safety Team. The Hartford Central School District consists of the following facilities:
 - Middle / High School
 - Technology Building
 - AEP Building
 - Floyd Harwood Elementary School
 - Transportation Department
- All information pertaining to an emergency or violent incident will be directed to the District Safety Team;
- Upon the activation of the District Safety Team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified by calling 9-1-1;
- County and State resources through existing established protocols may supplement emergency response efforts;

D. Plan Review and Public Comment

- This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the District Safety Team and reviewed on an annual basis and presented to the Board of Education for adoption;
- When significant changes are made, pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(e)(3) this plan will be made available for public comment 30 days prior to its adoption. The district-wide and building-level plans may be adopted by the School Board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students, and any other interested parties. The plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education;
- While linked to the District-wide School Safety Plan, Building-level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a; and
- Full copies of the District-wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be posted on the district's website.

Section II: Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Program Initiatives

The Hartford Central School District has offered programs and activities for improving communications among students and staff in order to report potentially violent incidents, such as:

- Athletic Programs;
- Programs concerned with bullying and violence prevention;
- New York State School Safety Guide (2007);
- Collaboration with the Washington County Sheriff's Office;
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (i.e. "Bucket Fillers", Tanager Pride);
- Dignity for All Students Act training.

Training, Drills, and Exercises

The Hartford Central School District has developed policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students, including the strategies for implementing training related to multi-hazards. The district has established the following procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students:

Review of building emergency response procedures with staff at the beginning of the school year;

- Full participation in the Annual Early Dismissal – "Go Home Early Drill";
- Full participation in an on-site sheltering and accountability drill;
- Full participation with four annual lock-down drills;
- The district conducts eight Fire Alarm Activation and Evacuation Drills annually;
- The district conducts four School Bus Safety and Evacuation Drills annually;
- District Safety Team members participate in simulated tabletop exercises annually to test the building-level safety plan components;
- The district has conducted drills and other training exercises to test components of the emergency response in coordination with the following agencies:
 - Washington County Office of Emergency Services
 - Hartford Volunteer Fire Department
 - Department of Homeland Security
 - Washington County Sheriff's Office
 - New York State Police Troop G
 - Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Service
- Note: Directly following each test, or drill, a debriefing will be conducted to evaluate the exercises and determine if changes to the emergency response plan are necessary. Notes are taken during exercises and the debriefing, which are used during the evaluation process.

Implementation of School Security

The Hartford Central School District has developed policies and procedures related to school building security, including the following:

- All visitors who enter district buildings are directed to the Main Office to sign-in and receive identification (Visitor Badge). Anyone who is found in the building without a badge is directed back to the Main Office to sign in;
- The Middle/High School and Floyd Harwood Elementary School have secured front entrances;
- Security Cameras are installed in the Middle/High School and Floyd Harwood Elementary School. Future projects will provide additional cameras and a possible switch to digital systems;
- Annual security audits are conducted by local law enforcement and BOCES risk management personnel
 - Note: Policies and procedures are continually being evaluated and shaped by real life experiences, such as bomb threats, forced entry into the school building with vandalism and outburst of potentially violent behavior by students.
- The Hartford Central School District is partnering with the Washington County Sheriff's Department for the incorporation of a school resource officer.

Vital Education Agency Information

- The Hartford Central School District consists of three educational facilities, one transportation facility, and one Alternative Energy Plant.

B. Hazard Identification

- The identification of sites of potential emergencies is located in *Maps and Diagrams* in the Building-Level Emergency Plan. The locations of potential hazards are documented on a building and facility diagram. Potential off-site hazards are identified in the County/Town Hazard Assessment in each of the plans.

Section III: Response

A. Notification and Activation of Internal and External Communications

- The district policies and procedures for contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident are located in the Building-Level Emergency Plan. The plan identifies individuals who are authorized to initiate contact with local law enforcement agencies. All communications during an incident at the school will flow through the Incident Command Center. Emergency services will be requested through the 9-1-1 system;
- In the event of an emergency, staff, students, and visitors will be contacted in one or more of the following manners:
 - Telephone
 - PA System
 - Automatic Notification System
 - Runner with Verbal
 - Email
 - Local Media Outlets

- The district has established guidelines for staff and students that in the event that they initially discover an emergency situation, or impending emergency, that they will notify the Principal and provide him/her with information on the nature of the event. In the event that the Principal cannot be reached, the District Safety Team will be contacted;
- Procedures for School Cancellation/Early Dismissal and Community Notification protocol for contacting parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal are outlined in the Building-Level Plan. This includes using local media in some instances as well as an automated notification system;

B. Situational Responses

- The district has developed multi-hazard response plans. These guidelines are present in the Multi-hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in the Building-Level Emergency Plan. The emergencies addressed in the plan include, but are not limited to:

Threats of Violence	Hostage/Kidnapping	Natural/Weather Related
Civil Disturbance	School Bus Accident	Gas Leak
Intruder	Explosion	Bomb Threat
Hazardous Material	Mass Casualty	Biological Threat
Public Health Threat	Radiological	Water Emergency
Loss of Facility	Loss of Transportation	Building Structural Failure

Others, as determined by the District Safety Team.

- The guidelines provide basic instructions for responding to any given incident, such as:
 - Contacting emergency response agencies;
 - Moving occupants from an area of danger to an areas of safety;
 - Assembling the District Safety Team and implementing the Incident Command system;
 - Notifying school administration and the District Safety Team of the incident;
 - Community/Parental notification;
 - Sheltering or student release procedures; and
 - Aftermath and Recovery

Responding to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

The Crisis Response Plan and Multi-hazard Emergency Response Action Guideline is the Building-Level Emergency Plan provides guidance on the district policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel, and/or visitors to the school. The following types of procedures are addressed in the plan, and could be used by the district:

- The use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to defuse the situation;

- Informing the Building Principal of implied or direct threat;
- Determining the level of threat with the District Safety Team;
- Contacting the appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary; and
- Monitoring the situation, adjusting the district’s response as appropriate, and including the possible implementation of the District’s Safety Team.

Acts of Violence

Multi-hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in the Building-Level Emergency Plan provide guidance on the district’s policies and procedures for responding to direct acts of violence by students, teacher, other school personnel, and visitors to the school. The following types of procedures are addressed in the plan, and could be used by the district:

- Determine the level of threat with the District Safety Team;
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate, if possible;
- Inform the Building Principal and District Safety Team;
- If necessary, initiate the lockdown or lockout procedures and contact appropriate law enforcement agency; or
- Monitor the situation, adjust the level of response, if necessary, initiate early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuation procedures.

Note: The Hartford Central School District “Code of Conduct” describes policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, or school personnel, and visitors to the school.

Response Protocols

The Incident Command System and Multi-hazard Emergency Response Action Guideline in the Building-Level Emergency Plan provide guidance on the district’s policies and procedures for responding to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions, and kidnappings. The following protocols are provided as examples:

- Identification of decision-makers;
- Plans to safeguard students and staff;
- Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary;
- Procedures to notify parents;
- Procedures to notify media; and
- Debriefing procedures.

The Hartford Central School District is allowing for the temporary covering of vision panels in spaces that cannot maintain an “Out of sight” location for a lock-down. The rooms have been examined for configuration and furniture layout. To ensure the safety of our students and staff we have found there is no other reasonable option. Temporary covering will only be permitted during emergency situations and drills. The covering must be removed promptly after the conclusion of the event.

The Hartford Central School District is allowing for the temporary barricading of doors in the event a room cannot be secured during a lockdown. The staff member in such space shall make every reasonable attempt to secure the space in accordance with applicable codes however, if this is not feasible barricading will be viewed as an acceptable option.

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

A section on Emergency Communications in the Building-Level Emergency Plan provides guidance for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency service organizations and local government agencies. The following examples are the types of arrangements that could be used by the district:

- In an emergency, the Superintendent, or his or her designee, will contact the regional emergency dispatch center by calling 9-1-1. The dispatcher will determine the appropriate services needed for the district;
- The Superintendent, or his or her designee, contacts the highest-ranking local Town official to provide notification and/or request assistance.

Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Offices

The district will utilize procedures outlined in Emergency Communication and the Incident Command System sections in the Building-Level Emergency Plan for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials, including the county or Town officials responsible for the implementation of Article 2-B of Executive Law. The types of procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local governments during countywide emergencies could include the following:

- Superintendent, or his or her 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:
 - Washington County Department of Public Safety;
 - Hartford Volunteer Fire Department;
 - Town of Hartford;
 - Fort Ann Central School District;
 - Adirondack Chapter of the American Red Cross;
 - New York State Police, Troop G;
 - Washington County Sheriff's Office;
 - Washington County Department of Public Health; and
 - Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Services

District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

A District and Building Resource and Supply Inventory is located in the Building-Level Emergency Plan and identifies the district resources, which may be available during an emergency, which could include the identification of resources such as available facilities, , food supply, communication equipment, fire extinguishers, first aid supplies, flashlights, district vehicles and busses.

Procedures to Coordinate the Use of School District Resources and Personnel during Emergencies

Within the Building-Level Emergency Plan there is a description of the district's procedure to coordinate the use of resources and personnel during emergencies. These sections include the identification of the officials authorized to make decisions and the staff members assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.

Protective Action Options

The Building-Level Emergency Plan describes the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate:

- School cancellation prior to the start of school;
- Early dismissal;
- Evacuation before, during, or after school hours; and
- Sheltering procedures.

Section IV: Recovery

A. District Support for Buildings

- The Building-Level Emergency Plan provides resources for supporting the District Safety Team and Crisis Response Team at the Hartford Central School District. The district's Incident Command System Plan identifies alternates to relieve team members, and interfaces with the Crisis Response Plan to provide team members the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment. Additionally, members of the Crisis Management Team will be provided with sufficient manpower to allow the rotation of personnel and the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment.

B. Disaster Mental Health Services

- The Administrative branch of the Crisis Response Team will work through the School Psychologist, Guidance Office, and School Nurse to coordinate disaster mental health resources through the County Mental Health Department, community resources, neighboring school districts, and other disaster mental health resources to fully support members of the Crisis Response Team.
- A debriefing of the Crisis Response Team is an essential part of the recovery phase following an emergency incident. The debriefing will be used in part to evaluate the district's plan for possible revisions.

Section V: Appendices

While linked to the District-wide Safety Plan, appendices shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.

- Appendix 1: Listing of all school buildings covered by the District-wide Safety Plan with the address of the building, contact names, and telephone numbers for building staff is located in the Building-Level Emergency Plan.
- Appendix 2: The identification of where copies of the Building-Level Emergency Plan issued to local and state law enforcement agencies is located in the Building-Level Emergency Plan.