

# New York State Homeland Security System for Schools

**Our mission is to raise the knowledge, skill, and opportunity of all the people in New York.**

Richard P. Mills, President of The University of the State of New York (USNY)  
and Commissioner of Education



University of the State of New York  
State Education Department



New York State Police  
Superintendent James W. McMahon

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March 20, 2003

To: District Superintendents of Schools  
Superintendents of the Big 5 City School Districts  
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools  
Charter School Administrators

The federal government has placed the nation on orange alert, and Governor Pataki has responded by placing New York State on Orange alert as well.<sup>1</sup> Anticipating the possibility of terrorist attacks, all of us must make the best possible preparations to eliminate or reduce the possibility of harm to those for whom we are responsible.

The New York State Education Department, the New York State Police, and the Office of Public Security, in consultation with the District Superintendents of the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), the BOCES Pupil Health and Safety Teams, and the New York State Center for School Safety, have created this guidance document: *New York State Homeland Security for Schools*. Its purpose is to provide a uniform system for notifying school districts of possible threats and appropriate response actions. It is meant to provide guidelines for school officials to make informed decisions in consultation with local law enforcement and emergency personnel in the context of district and building School Safety Plans.

The National Color Code System for Homeland Security was used as a baseline for this Homeland Security System for Schools. After the Governor has announced the alert level for New York State, the State Education Department in consultation with the State Police and the Office of Public Security will inform schools of appropriate alert status. Please keep in mind that in times of emergency, depending on the circumstance, you may be given additional guidance by any of the following authorities: the Governor, the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO), the State Police, Office of Public Security, your County Emergency Management Coordinator or the State Education Department.

**Please note that a red alert will be declared only in the event of an imminent, site-specific threat. Such an alert is likely to be very localized, based on credible intelligence information. Not all areas of the state will be affected the same in the case of a statewide red alert.**

Please review your current school safety plan. There may be areas that need to be updated, in light of current realities. Of particular importance are the identification of people with responsibility to implement the safety plan; the availability of keys, equipment, communication devices; the identification of sites inside and outside your buildings that may be crucial to your response. A clear chain of command, combined with appropriate practice and rehearsal will help to maintain calm and ensure the safety of all concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective April 16, 2003, the National and New York State color codes were both changed to Yellow, with the exception of New York City, which remains at Orange.

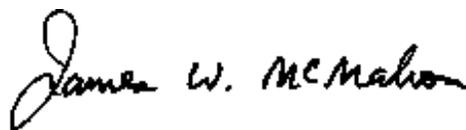
This manual includes the following tools to help you make decisions in your school districts:

- Color Coded Risk Chart
- Definitions
- School Safety Plan Review Procedures
- Response Actions
- School Safety Audit Checklist
- Bomb Threat Response Instruction Card
- Resources
- Legal Citations

We hope you find this document helpful. If you have questions, you may contact Laura Sahr, Stated Education Department Emergency Planning Liaison, at 518-474-3906 or [lsahr@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:lsahr@mail.nysed.gov).

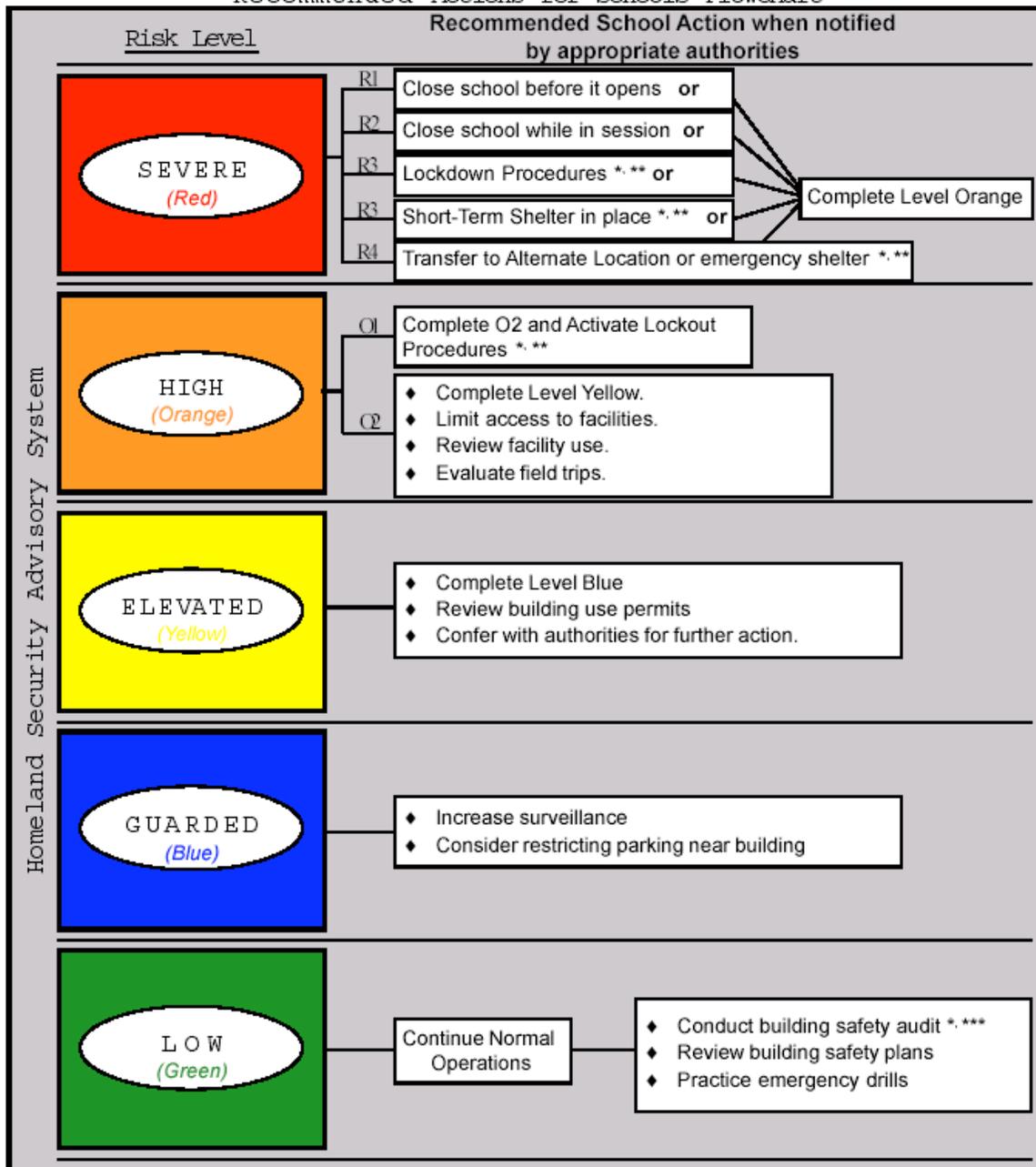


Richard P. Mills



James W. McMahon

Color Coded Risk Level System and  
Recommended Actions for Schools Flowchart



These are all actions to be taken by school districts upon direction from the County Executive, State Education Department, State Police, and/or State Emergency Management Office through the District Superintendent.

\* See page 7 for definitions.

\*\* See page 13 for instructions and response actions.

\*\*\* See page 16 for instructions and response actions.

The ultimate responsibility for actions taken in a district rests with district administration. These recommended actions are guidelines and should be implemented based on the judgment and discretion of authorized district officials.

# Homeland Security Recommended Actions

## Level Red – Severe Risk

**Please note that a red alert will be declared only in the event of an imminent, site-specific threat. Such an alert is likely to be very localized, based on credible intelligence information. Not all areas of the state will be affected the same in the case of a statewide red alert.**

R1 Close school before opening

R2 Close schools while in session – Districts will close schools as soon as it is feasible. Students will not be released unless there is reasonable assurance that they will be in the custody of legally designated adults. Any student who is not released will be transported to one designated site within the district. Parents will be notified in advance of this procedure.

R3 Lockdown - School staff and students are secured in the rooms they are currently in and no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been curtailed.

R4 Short-term Shelter in Place – Everyone reports to the assigned classroom as quickly as possible. Close and lock classroom doors and windows. Students not in the room are to report to the alternate shelter site. Take attendance. Intercoms, radios and televisions may be used for getting information during the event. Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom. Wait for further instructions.

R5 Transfer to Alternate Location or Emergency Shelter – In the event of an order of a full evacuation to another building, or to a non-school building, assigned nurses will move first-aid supplies & medications with special needs students to their designated building(s). Staff will be assigned to students who need special treatment. REMAIN at the assigned area until released.

## Level Orange – High Risk

O1 Complete O2 and activate Lockout Procedures - This procedure allows the school to continue with the normal school day, but curtails outside activity. Allows no unauthorized personnel into the building.

O2 Complete Level Yellow  
Limit access to facilities  
Review facility use  
Evaluate field trips

## Level Yellow – Elevated Risk

Review building use permits  
Confer with authorities for further actions

## Level Blue – Guarded Risk

Restrict parking and increase surveillance

## Level Green – Low Risk

Normal Operations

# Definitions

**Clear and Sanitized Area:** An assembly space, such as the gymnasium, that is used to shelter students, faculty and staff after it has been thoroughly searched by school volunteers and law enforcement for suspicious packages and objects.

**Emergency Response Team:** Designation of an emergency response team comprised of school personnel, local law enforcement officials and representatives from local, regional and/or state emergency response agencies, other appropriate incident response teams and a post-incident response team that includes appropriate school personnel, medical personnel, mental health counselors and others who can assist the school community in coping with the aftermath of a violent incident.

**Incident Command System:** The Incident Command System, also known as ICS, is defined as a standardized on-scene emergency management system that allows multi-agencies to work together without any jurisdictional boundary problems. ICS defines the chain of command as a series of management positions in order of authority. Individuals in the chain of command are from different agencies and positions.

**Lockdown:** A procedure used when there is an immediate and imminent threat to the school building population. School staff and students are secured in the rooms they are currently in and no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been curtailed. This allows the school to secure the students and staff in place and remove any innocent bystanders from immediate danger. Most commonly used when building has an intruder.  
*(See page 13 for Lockdown instructions and procedures.)*

**Lockout:** Allows no unauthorized personnel into the building. All exterior doors are locked and main entrance is monitored by administrators, security or school resource officer. This procedure allows the school to continue with the normal school day, but curtails outside activity. Most commonly used when incident is occurring outside school building, on or off school property.  
*(See page 14 for Lockout instructions and procedures.)*

**School Safety Plan:** All emergency response plans developed by building-level school safety teams must include the following elements: policies and procedures for the safe evacuation of students, teachers, other school personnel as well as visitors to the school in the event of a

serious violent incident or other emergency, which shall include evacuation routes and shelter sites and procedures for addressing medical needs, transportation and emergency notification to persons in parental relation to a student.

**School Safety Team:** Team appointed by principal in accordance with guidelines established by the board of education, chancellor or other governing body; responsible for developing the school building safety plan. Teams shall include but not be limited to representatives of teacher, administrator and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel, community members, local law enforcement officials, local ambulance or other emergency response agencies, and any other representatives the board of education, chancellor or other governing body deems appropriate.

**Short-Term Shelter in Place:** A procedure whereby the entire school population is moved to a single (or multiple) location(s) in the school (depending on building population) that has been clear and sanitized. Most commonly used during bomb threats and weather emergencies. *(See page 14 for Short-Term Shelter in Place instructions and procedures.)*

# School Safety Plan Review

The effectiveness of any response to a crisis is strongly linked to the extent and appropriateness of the planning and preparation process. Your district has developed a safety plan to deal with emergencies such as, bomb threats, biohazards, chemical agents, and radiation, among others not yet determined. The possibility of dangerous events following the onset of war makes review of those plans the critical foundation for your preparedness.

## Essential Elements:

- Viable chain of command – internal and external
- Communication system
- Informed staff, student body and community
- Procedures for people with special needs
- Practiced procedures

## The Review

Your district safety plan has been structured to address a variety of threats that might affect your school community. It is a valuable tool to assist you now. A thorough review of your current plan, keeping in mind changes that have occurred since it was initially developed, will help to ensure that any needed response to an emergency is timely, orderly, and effective. The review of your safety plan may start by answering the guiding questions. These questions provide a solid basis for review of your school safety plan procedures and processes – both at the district and the building level – within the context of current realities. It is likely that you will need to update, modify or develop aspects of the plan in order to reflect changes.

Initially published in the *Guidance Document for School Safety Plans* (Project SAVE), the questions have been streamlined to focus on assessment of the relevance and accuracy of your school safety plan. The items included in this document are organized into two broad categories that group activities and strategies to reduce redundancy and/or overlap in policies and procedures:

- Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention
- Response

PROJECT SAVE  
(Safe Schools Against Violence in Education)

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**  
**DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

*Commissioner's Regulation 155.17*

These questions have been organized into a series of broad categories that group similar activities and strategies in order to reduce any redundancy and/or overlap in policies and procedures:

- Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention
- Response

**Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention**

***Prevention/Intervention Strategies: Program Initiatives***

1. Have prevention and intervention programs been linked to community resources, including health and mental health?
2. Have strategies been developed for improving communication among students and between students and staff?
3. Do the strategies include safe and confidential ways for students to report potentially violent incidents?
4. Have best practices and effective strategies used by others been considered for improving communication?

***Prevention/Intervention Strategies: Training, Drills, and Exercises***

5. Have procedures been developed for review and the conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan?
6. Are the drills and exercises conducted in coordination with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials?

***Prevention/Intervention Strategies: Implementation of School Security***

7. Has the district developed a description of the policies and procedures related to school building security?
8. Have collaborative agreements been made with state and local law enforcement officials to ensure that school safety officers, if used, are adequately trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and are effectively and fairly recruited?
9. Have descriptions been developed of the duties of hall monitors and any other school safety personnel?

***Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors***

10. Have policies and procedures been developed for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors?
11. Have materials been distributed to teachers, administrators, and school personnel, persons in parental relation to students, students and others deemed appropriate to receive such information?
12. Are staff trained on identification of risk and protective factors to help children?

### ***Hazard Identification***

13. Have districts identified sites of potential internal and external emergencies?
14. Have potential hazards in the neighborhood and community been considered, such as facilities containing toxic, chemically reactive, and/or radioactive materials; high voltage power lines; transportation routes of vehicles including trucks and trains carrying hazardous materials; underground gas and oil pipelines; underground utility vaults and aboveground transformers; multi-story buildings vulnerable to damage or collapse; water towers and tanks; and other potentially hazardous sites in your community?
15. Has the district consulted with your local emergency managers on the hazard analysis for the area in which your school district is located?

## **Response**

### ***Notification and Activation***

1. Are there policies and procedures for contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident or other emergency?
2. Are there provisions for notifying appropriate agencies, including police, fire, rescue, mental health, and others, where necessary?
3. Has an appropriate local law enforcement liaison for the district's area been identified?
4. Has a communication protocol been established with and between the local law enforcement agencies?
5. Have staff been trained on emergency reporting procedures?
6. Have appropriate responses been identified for responding to emergencies?
7. Are there protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage-takings, intrusions and kidnappings?
8. Have local law enforcement officials been consulted about the protocols?
9. Have current State Education Department materials been reviewed to link protocols to recommended procedures?
10. Are students and teachers knowledgeable about what to do in an emergency?
11. Have policies and procedures been developed for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal?
12. Do the policies and procedures address issues of ensuring accurate, timely and consistent information to parents?
13. Do the policies and procedures identify the medium (i.e., telephone call, press release, letter, other) that will be used to communicate with parents?
14. Have parents been informed about the ways they will be contacted in the event of an emergency, including information provided in the primary language of the parents?
15. Do you have policies and procedures for responding to media inquires?
16. Do you have a media liaison or public information officer?
17. Do you have a dedicated emergency phone line to use in an emergency?

### ***Situational Responses: Multi-hazard Responses***

18. Are there provisions for taking action in emergencies?
19. Are there descriptions of actions to be taken in response to specific emergencies, including school cancellation, early dismissal, evacuation and sheltering?
20. Are both internal and external evacuation routes included in the plan?
21. Do these actions include provisions for incidents before, during and after school hours?
22. Are provisions included for evacuation of building occupants with special needs?

23. Has there been an identification of district resources that may be available during an emergency?
24. Are there provisions for emergency supplies and first aid kits for all schools?
25. Are portable communication devices available, if they are needed?
26. Are there provisions for transportation in an emergency?

***Situational Responses: Response Protocols and Relationships with Other Agencies***

27. Has a description of procedures to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during an emergency been prepared?
28. Are the officials authorized to make decisions in an emergency identified?
29. Are staff members assigned or designated to provide assistance during an emergency identified?
30. Are roles and responsibilities of district and school staff clearly defined?
31. Are there contingency provisions if one or more key individuals are not available, or unable to perform their roles and responsibilities?
32. Have descriptions been developed of the arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local governmental agencies?
33. Has a system been developed for informing all educational agencies within the school district of a disaster?
34. Has information been gathered and documented about each educational agency located in the school district, including information on school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and the business and home phone numbers of key officials of each educational agency?
35. Have procedures been developed 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? (see page 30)
36. Has a security assessment of school buildings been conducted in cooperation with law enforcement, school security staff, teachers, other school staff, and others, where appropriate?
37. Are school visitors required to sign in, sign out, and wear visible visitor's passes when visiting school buildings?

A comprehensive set of guiding questions can be found on the project SAVE website at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/rscs/chaps/SAVE/SchoolSafetywebpage.htm>.

# Response Actions

## Bomb Threat, Lockdown, Lockout, Short-Term Shelter in Place

**NOTE:** Your district safety plan and building response plans should be used as the basis for action. The key decisions should have been addressed there, making response simple and effective. A clear chain of command is essential, as is a viable communication system. The response plan should be practiced regularly to ensure that everyone knows their role.

### Bomb Threat

Bomb threat guidelines are available upon request.

### Lockdown

This procedure is used when there is an immediate and imminent threat to the school building population. School staff and students are secured in the rooms they are currently in and no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been curtailed. This allows the school to secure the students and staff in place and remove any innocent bystanders from immediate danger. Most commonly used when building has an intruder. Questions to ask?

1. Does the school have a lockdown procedure in place? Is it activated using a predetermined phrase or other code?
2. Do all the staff members have keys to lock the doors of their rooms?
3. Have teachers arranged classrooms in advance, using “line of sight” as guidance?
4. What are the procedures for ensuring that all students and staff are accounted for?
5. Does each teacher know what his/her responsibilities are?
6. Have substitutes been informed of and trained in the emergency procedures?
7. Has the lockdown procedure been practiced by the entire school?

#### **Steps to implement lockdown after threat have been identified:**

- 1) Lockdown signal is given – maybe a code phrase or audible sound from speakers. Can be initiated by any school building Management Personnel.
- 2) **Call 911.**
- 3) Teachers/Staff follow preset instructions to secure doors, turn out lights, cover windows, pull shades, and move students out of line of sight of door windows.
- 4) Teachers/Staff take attendance and record students that are in the room, missing and extra students from the hall and await further instructions.
- 5) Teachers are not allowed to open doors for ANYONE under ANY Circumstances
- 6) All activities cease.
- 7) Students/Staff outside building must evacuate to a predetermined, off-campus, location. This includes bus runs and field trips.

## **Lockout**

This is a procedure, which allows the school to continue with the normal school day, but curtails outside activity, and allows no unauthorized personnel into the building. Most commonly used when incident is occurring outside school building, on or off school property.

### **Steps to implement Lockout after possible threat have been identified:**

- 1) Announce Lockout has been implemented.
- 2) **Call 911.**
- 3) Activate building emergency plan and implement Incident Command System in accordance with safety plan instructions.
- 4) Have students who are outside immediately return to school building.
- 5) Administrators/Custodians/Assigned staff - lock and secure all exterior doors and entrances.
- 6) Monitor main entrance and allow only AUTHORIZED personnel into building.
- 7) Consider using "barricades" close off school driveways and parking lots.
- 8) Consider modified release of students for end of school day.

## **Short-Term Shelter in Place**

Procedure whereby the entire school population is moved to a single (or multiple) location(s) in the school (depending on building population). Most commonly used during bomb threats and weather emergencies.

### **Steps to implement Short-Term Shelter in Place after threat of emergency has been identified:**

- 1) Activate building emergency plan and implement Incident Command System in accordance with the safety plan instructions.
- 2) Activate Emergency Response Teams.
- 3) Advise the staff and students to proceed to their designated shelter in place area.
- 4) **Call 911.**
- 5) Staff and students proceed to their designated locations in an orderly fashion.
- 6) Teachers/Staff must take attendance and forward it to the principal or his/her designee.
- 7) Depending on emergency, consider using "barricades" to close off school driveways and parking lots.
- 8) Principal and designees assist emergency personnel as necessary.
- 9) Consider modified release of students depending on emergency and time of day.
- 10) If long-term shelter is needed, consult with county emergency management personnel.

# School Safety Audit Checklist

Based on work done by Virginia State Education Department and modified by the New York State Police as a resource for school personnel.

## Components of the Audit Process

School safety is the responsibility of everyone – staff, students, parents, and the community. An audit is one tool that, if used effectively, can provide a snapshot of the school's level of safety and identify those areas that need improvement. This proactive process will help ensure that students can maximize their learning potential within a safe and secure environment.

School safety encompasses multiple domains within the school environment that must be reviewed altogether when assessing the level of safety for students and staff. The ten minimum components of the audit process that should be assessed are:

1. Development and Enforcement of Policies
2. Procedures for Data Collection
3. Development of Intervention and Prevention Plans
4. Level of Staff Development
5. Opportunities for Student involvement
6. Level of Parent and Community Involvement
7. Role of Law Enforcement
8. Standards for Safety and Security Personnel
9. Safety and Security of Buildings and Grounds
10. Development of Emergency Response Plans

How often should a safety audit be conducted? A complete safety audit should be conducted every three years. A review of the identified implementation and improvements noted in the complete audit should be conducted on an annual basis.

## Audit Procedure Preparation and Planning

It is recommended that a team be established to conduct the school safety audit. Each team should be comprised of at least three to five people representing a variety of stakeholders. These should include, but not be limited to, the central office administration, teachers, parents, and law enforcement personnel. To ensure neutrality and objectivity, it is suggested, when applicable, that team members should not audit their own facility. For example, the audit team in School A should audit School B, and vice-versa. Audits may also be conducted by qualified, private organizations outside the school system. Audit Team members should review the following documents and materials, preferably in advance of the on-site visit:

1. Student / Staff Code of Conduct
2. Data on Student Discipline Referrals
3. Criminal Data (reported by the school and by the surrounding community)
4. Blueprint of the school
5. Crisis Management Plan
6. Overview of the SAVE Legislation
7. New York State Department of Education Homeland Security System for Schools

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL EXTERIOR AND PLAY AREAS	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
School grounds are fenced.				
a. What kind				
If yes, approximate height				
There is one clearly marked and designated entrance for visitors				
Signs are posted for visitors to report to main office through a designated entrance.				
Restricted areas are clearly marked				
Shrubs and foliage are trimmed to allow for good line of sight. (3'-0"/8'-0" rule)				
All poisonous shrubs, trees, and foliage have been removed.				
Shrubs near building have been trimmed "up" to allow view of bottom of building				
Bus loading and drop-off zones are clearly defined.				
Access to bus loading area is restricted to other vehicles during loading/unloading.				
Staff is assigned to bus loading/drop off areas.				
There is a schedule for maintenance of:				
a. Outside lights				
b. Locks/Hardware				
c. Storage Sheds				
d. Windows				
e. Other exterior buildings				

SCHOOL EXTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Parent drop-off and pick-up area is clearly defined.				
There is adequate lighting around the building.				
Lighting is provided at entrances and other points of possible intrusion.				
The school ground is free from trash or debris.				
The school is free of graffiti.				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL EXTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Play areas are fenced.				
Playground equipment has tamper-proof fasteners				
Visual surveillance of bicycle racks is possible.				
Visual surveillance of parking lots from main office is possible				
Parking lot is lighted properly and all lights are functioning				
Accessible lenses are protected by some unbreakable material				
All areas of school buildings and grounds are accessible to patrolling security vehicles.				
Driver education vehicles are secure.				
Students/Staff are issued parking stickers for assigned parking areas				
Student access to parking area is restricted to arrival and dismissal times.				
Staff and visitor parking has been designated				
Outside hardware has been removed from all doors except at points of entry.				
Ground floor windows:				
a. no broken panes,				
b. locking hardware in working order				
Basement windows are protected with grill or well cover.				
Doors are locked when classrooms are vacant.				
High-risk areas are protected by high security locks and an alarm system				
a. Main office				
b. Cafeteria				
c. Computer Labs				
d. Industrial Arts rooms				
e. Science labs				
f. Nurses Office				
g. Boiler Room				
h. Electrical Rooms				
i. Phone line access closet				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL EXTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Unused areas of the school can be closed off during after school activities.				
There is two-way communication between the main office and:				
a. Classroom				
b. Duty stations				
c. Re-heatable classrooms				
d. Staff and faculty outside building				
e. Buses				
Students are restricted from loitering in corridors, hallways, and restrooms.				
"Restricted" areas are properly identified.				
There are written regulations restricting student access to school grounds and buildings.				

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
There is a central alarm system in the school. If yes, briefly describe.				
The main entrance is visible from the main office.				
There is only one clearly marked and designated entrance for visitors.				
Multiple entries to the building are controlled and supervised.				
Administrative staff maintain a highly visible profile				
Signage directing visitors to the main office are clearly posted				
Visitors are required to sign in.				
Visitors are issued I.D. cards or badges.				
Proper identification is required of vendors, repairmen.				
All staff - Full and part-time staff are issued ID cards that is worn in a manner that is visible				
The following areas are properly lighted:				
a. Hallways				
b. Bathrooms				
c. Stairwells				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Hallways and Bathrooms are supervised by staff.				
The bathroom walls are free of graffiti.				
Doors accessing internal courtyards are securely locked from the inside				
Exit signs are clearly visible and pointing in the correct direction.				
Switches and controls are properly located and protected.				
Access to electrical panels is restricted.				
The possibility of lower energy consumption and high lighting levels with more efficient light sources has been explored.				
Directional lights are aimed at the building.				
Mechanical rooms and other hazardous storage areas are kept locked using key only access locking system				
School files and records are maintained in locked, vandal proof, fire proof containers or vaults.				
The school maintains a record of all maintenance on doors, windows, lockers, or other areas of the school.				
If a classroom is vacant, students are restricted from entering the room alone.				
Friends, relatives or non-custodial parents are required to have written permission to pick up a student from school.				
Students are required to have written permission to leave school during school hours.				
Full and part-time staff including bus drivers are issued I.D. cards or other identification.				
There are written regulations regarding access and control of school personnel using the building after school hours.				
Staff members who remain after school hours are required to sign out.				
Faculty members are required to lock classrooms upon leaving.				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
One person is designated to perform the following security checks at the end of day:				
a. That all classrooms and offices are locked				
b. All restrooms are empty				
c. All locker rooms are empty				
d. Check all exterior entrances are locked				
e. Check all night lights are working				
f. Check the alarm system				
The telephone numbers of the principal or other designated contact person are provided to the police department so the police can make contact in the event of a suspicious or emergency situation.				
Law enforcement personnel and/or community residents monitor school grounds after school hours.				
All school equipment is permanently marked with an Identification Number.				
An up-to-date inventory is maintained for all expendable school supplies.				
Secure storage is available for valuable items				
a. During school hours				
b. After school				
There is a policy for handling cash received at the school.				
There is regular maintenance and/or testing of the entire security alarm system at least every six months.				
Are classrooms numbered with reflective material:				
a. Over door				
b. On bottom of door				
c. On exterior window				
Has consideration been given to replacing interior doors with large windows to doors with small windows				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Has consideration been given to replacing present classroom locks with locks that can be activated from the inside				
Does the P. A. system work properly				
a. Can it be accessed from several areas in the school				
b. Can it be heard, and understood, outside				
Has consideration been given to establishing a greater window inside first set of exterior doors				
Are convex mirrors used to see around corners in hallways				
Are convex mirrors used to see up and down stairwells				
Do all exterior doors have signs requiring visitors to report to the main office to sign in and obtain I.D.				
Has consideration been given to installing Proximity Readers on certain exterior doors				
Has consideration been given to installing strobe lights or flashing lights on exterior of building to warn staff and students outside of problems				
How do you communicate during emergencies				
a. Two way radios				
b. Cell phones				
c. Pagers				
d. Other				
Who is issued two way radios				
a. Administrators				
b. Custodians				
c. Members of the Emergency Response Team				
d. Other				
There is a control system in place to monitor keys and duplicates.				
Exterior light fixtures are securely mounted.				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Mechanical rooms and hazardous storage areas are locked.				
Fire drills are conducted as required by New York Education Law				
A record of health permits is maintained.				
A record of Fire Inspection by the local or state Fire Officer is maintained.				

DEVELOPMENT / ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
The Student Conduct Policy is reviewed and updated annually.				
A visitor policy is in effect, requiring a sign-in procedure for all visitors, including visible identification.				
The school has a Crisis Management Plan in effect that is reviewed and updated annually.				
The Incident Command System is an integral part of the Safety Plan				
A chain-of-command has been established for the school when the principal and/or other administrators are away from the building.				
The school has implemented pro-active security measures on campus, at school-sponsored activities, and on all school property (i.e., school buses).				
Disciplinary consequences for infractions to the Code of Conduct are fairly and consistently enforced.				
Parents are an integral part of student discipline procedures and actions.				
Alternatives to suspensions and expulsions have been built into the discipline policy and are consistently used.				
Behavioral expectations and consequences for violations are clearly outlined in the Code of Conduct, including sanctions for weapon and drug offenses and all other criminal acts.				
Parents are an integral part of the schools safety planning and policy making				
Parents are an integral part of students discipline procedures and actions				
The policy provides a system(s) whereby staff and students may report problems or incidents anonymously.				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

DEVELOPMENT / ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Specific policies and/or procedures are in place that detail staff members' responsibilities for monitoring and supervising students outside the classroom, such as in hallways, cafeteria, rest rooms, etc.				
The school has implemented a pro-active policy regarding parental actions during sporting events				

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
All Violations of state and federal law are reported to law enforcement.				
An incident reporting procedure for disruptive and violent students has been established in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements				
Records or data have been established and are analyzed to identify recurring problems.				
Accident reports are filed when a student is injured on school property or during school-related activities.				
The incident reporting system is reviewed and updated annually.				

INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PLANS	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Students have access to conflict resolution programs.				
Students are assisted in developing anger management skills.				
Diversity awareness is emphasized.				
Programs are available for students who are academically at-risk.				
Students may seek help without the loss of confidentiality.				
Students and parents are aware of community resources.				
Character education is taught as part of the curriculum in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

STAFF DEVELOPMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Administrators and staff (including security and law enforcement personnel) are trained in conflict resolution methods.				
Administrators and staff (including security and law enforcement personnel) are trained in implementation of the Crisis Management Plan.				
Administrators and staff are trained in personal safety.				
School security officers (NOT law enforcement) receive in-service training for their responsibilities.				
School Resource Officers (law enforcement) receive in-service training for their responsibilities.				
School volunteers receive training to perform their duties.				
Teachers and staff are made aware of their legal responsibilities for the enforcement of safety rules, policies, and state and federal laws.				
School safety and violence prevention information is regularly provided as part of staff development plan in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements				
Staff development opportunities extend to support staff, including cafeteria workers, custodial staff, secretarial staff, and bus drivers.				

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Students are represented on the School Safety Team.				
The school provides opportunities for student leadership related to violence prevention and safety issues.				
The school provides adequate recognition opportunities for all students.				
Students are adequately instructed in their responsibility to avoid becoming victims of violence (i.e., by avoiding high-risk situations, etc.).				

LEVEL OF PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
The community supports the school's programs and activities that teach safety and non-violence.				
School activities, services, and curricula reflect the characteristics of the students and the community.				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

LEVEL OF PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
School safety planning reflects the neighborhood, including crime and hazardous conditions.				
Parents are an integral part of the school's safety planning and policymaking.				
Parents are aware of behavioral expectations and are informed of changes in a timely manner.				
Local businesses and other community groups are involved in the school's safety planning.				

ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
Incidents of crime that occur on school property or at school-related events are reported to law enforcement.				
Law Enforcement is consulted on matters that may fall below the threshold of criminal activity				
Law enforcement personnel are an integral part of the school's safety planning process				
The school has developed an effective partnership with local law enforcement.				
The school and local law enforcement have developed an agreement of understanding, defining the roles and responsibilities of both.				
Law enforcement personnel provide a visible presence on campus during school hours and at school-related events.				
Local law enforcement provides after hours patrols of the school site.				

DEVELOPMENT OF A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
The school has a Crisis Management Plan.				
a. Reviewed on an annual basis				
b. Plan developed by the building safety team				
c. Team membership is in accordance with minimum requirements of the SAVE Legislation				
d. Meets minimum requirements of the SAVE Legislation				

# School Safety Audit Checklist

DEVELOPMENT OF A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
The school has established a well-coordinated emergency plan with law enforcement and other crisis response agencies.				
Categories listed in the plan should include, but may not be limited to, the following:				
a. Natural Disasters				
b. Accidents				
c. Acts of Violence				
d. Death				
e. Loss of power				
f. Fire				
The following components of the Crisis Management Plan are practiced on a quarterly basis				
a. Lockdown				
b. Lockout				
c. Shelter in place				
d. Evacuation of Building (can be done on a semi-annual basis)				

STANDARDS FOR SECURITY PERSONNEL	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
This school does employ security personnel.				
Pre-employment background checks are conducted for security personnel.				
School security personnel meet a standard for training and qualifications as mandated by New York State				
Security personnel have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.				
Security personnel are involved in the school's safe school planning process.				
Security personnel are knowledgeable about youth service providers, both in and out of the school.				

# Resources

<http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/Directory/TroopInfo/TroopInfoindex.html> - New York State Police website with Troop contact information/Troop locations.

<http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/unsettlingtimes.html> - *Coping with War and Terrorism* from the National Association of School Psychologists.

<http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/crisis/crisiscounselingguide.pdf> - *Crisis Counseling Guide for Children and Families in Disasters* from the New York State Office of Mental Health.

<http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan/> - Emergency Planning Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www.nycenet.edu/whatsnew/guidelines/guides.asp> - New York City Department of Education guidance for parents.

[http://www.travel.state.gov/spring\\_break.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/spring_break.html) - United States State Department Information regarding travel abroad.

<http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/hsas.html> - American National Red Cross Homeland Security Advisory System Recommendations.

NYS Police Bomb Threat Instruction Card - available upon request

<http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/Publications/Publicationsindex.html>

# Legal Citations

Pursuant to **Commissioner Regulation 155.17(b)(3)**, the color-coded risk levels and the associated protective actions for schools shall be considered an amendment to a school's existing building-level emergency response plan. A copy of the building-level plan, including amendments, shall be filed with local law enforcement agencies and with the state police within thirty days of its adoption. Building-level emergency response plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under article six of the public officer's law or any other provision of law.

**Education Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(g)** designates the chief communication liaison during a local or State emergency.

(1) Except in a school district in a city having a population of more than one million inhabitants, each [Each] district superintendent, during a local or State emergency, shall act as the chief communication liaison for all educational agencies within the supervisory district territorial limits.

(2) The superintendent of schools in the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers, during a local or State emergency, shall act as the chief communication liaison for all educational agencies located within the city district.

**Education Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(m)** delegates the Commissioner of Education with authority to direct emergency response actions by individual school districts.

The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee may order emergency response actions by individual school districts in the event that the local officials are unable or unwilling to take action deemed to be appropriate by State and/or county emergency personnel in accordance with county or State emergency preparedness plans or directives.

**Article 2-B of the State Executive Law** encompasses the legal authority to declare an emergency and suspend laws during such an emergency.

## **Sec. 28. State declaration of disaster emergency.**

Whenever the governor, on his own initiative or pursuant to a request from one or more chief executives, finds that a disaster has occurred or

may be imminent for which local governments are unable to respond adequately, he shall declare a disaster emergency by executive order.

**Sec. 29-a. Suspension of other laws.**

1. Subject to the state constitution, the federal constitution and federal statutes and regulations, and after seeking the advice of the commission, the governor may by executive order temporarily suspend specific provisions of any statute, local law, ordinance, or orders, rules or regulations, or parts thereof, of any agency during a state disaster emergency, if compliance with such provisions would prevent, hinder, or delay action necessary to cope with the disaster.

2. Suspensions pursuant to subdivision one of this section shall be subject to the following standards and limits:

a. no suspension shall be made for a period in excess of thirty days, provided, however, that upon reconsideration of all of the relevant facts and circumstances, the governor may extend the suspension for additional periods not to exceed thirty days each;

b. no suspension shall be made which does not safeguard the health and welfare of the public and which is not reasonably necessary to the disaster effort;

c. any such suspension order shall specify the statute, local law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation or part thereof to be suspended and the terms and conditions of the suspension;

d. the order may provide for such suspension only under particular circumstances, and may provide for the alteration or modification of the requirements of such statute, local law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation suspended, and may include other terms and conditions;

e. any such suspension order shall provide for the minimum deviation from the requirements of the statute, local law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation suspended consistent with the disaster action deemed necessary; and

f. when practicable, specialists shall be assigned to assist with the related emergency actions to avoid needless adverse effects resulting from such suspension.