

# **East Greenbush CSD District-Wide Safety Plan 2022-2023 School Year**

## **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 and emergencies.

The district-wide plan is responsive to the needs of the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans that are required at the school building level. District face risks from a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and manmade disasters. To address these threats, New York State has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses prevention, response, and recovery in respect to a variety of emergencies in each school district and its schools. Enacted into law in 2001, Project SAVE (also known as Education Law §2801-a) is fully supported by the East Greenbush Central School District and all of its schools. The Superintendent of the East Greenbush CSD, and the Board of Education of the East Greenbush CSD, encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

New York State Education Law § 2801-a, as well as Education Law Section 807, (as Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016, have both been amended as of July 1, 2016. This plan addresses Commissioner's Regulations 155.17(b)(13), as well as 155.17(c)(1)(i-xix), as prescribed by law.

## **Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines**

### **A. Purpose**

The East Greenbush CSD District-Wide Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation § 155.17, New York State Education Law § 2801-a, and Education Law Section 807. At the direction of the East Greenbush CSD Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools is tasked with the formation of a District-Wide School Safety Team and one of the charges of the District-Wide Team is the development and maintenance of the District-Wide Safety Plan and the Building-Level Safety Plans.

***As required in New York State Education Law § 2801-a, the East Greenbush CSD will designate Superintendent Jeffrey P. Simons as its Chief Emergency Officer for the 2022-2023 school year.***

### **B. Identification of School Teams**

The East Greenbush CSD has a District Emergency Response Team comprised of Central Office Administrators, the Districtwide Safety Coordinator, the Transportation Director, and the PPS Office Administrators, the Athletic Director, and other members of various Building Level Safety Teams. The initial response in any building will be by the Building Level Emergency Response Team, which may differ slightly from the Safety Team.

**C. Concept of Operations**

The District-Wide School Safety Plan is directly linked to the individual Building-Level Emergency Response Plans for the East Greenbush CSD. The protocols listed in the District-Wide School Safety Plan will be used to guide the development and implementation of the individual Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.

The development of the District-Wide School Safety Plan is an on-going, collaborative effort that includes the Superintendent of Schools, Central Administrative Team, the Districtwide Safety Coordinator, the District Safety Team, Building Administrators, the Building Level Safety Teams, the Transportation Department, and the local Emergency Services (Police, Fire, EMS, and Emergency Management). This plan was further developed with guidance from NYSED and the New York State Police.

The Superintendent of Schools has designated himself as the Chief Emergency Officer for the 2022-2023 school year. The Chief Emergency Officer (or designee) is responsible for coordinating communication between staff and law enforcement and first responders and for ensuring the staff’s understanding of the district-level safety plan. The Chief Emergency Officer (or designee) shall be responsible for ensuring complete and yearly update of the building-level emergency response plans.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team. The East Greenbush Central School District consists of the following facilities:

Columbia High School	Howard L. Goff Middle School
Genet Elementary School / Administration Center	Red Mill Elementary School
Green Meadow Elementary School	Bell Top Elementary School
Donald P. Sutherland Elementary School	Transportation Center

All staff members in the District will be trained on the Building Level Safety Plans during the first day of work in late August or early September, at the District’s first professional development day. If a staff member is hired after that date, they will be trained within 30 days of their hire date.

All information pertaining to an emergency or violent incident will be directed to either the Building Principal/Designee or the District Emergency Response Team.

Upon the activation of the Building Level Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee and District Emergency Response Team will be notified. When appropriate, local emergency officials will be notified by calling 9-1-1.

Town/Village, County, and State resources through existing established protocols may supplement the emergency response efforts.

**D. Plan Review and Public Comment**

This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the District and Building Level Emergency Response teams on an annual basis.

When significant changes are made, pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17(e)(3), this plan will be made available for thirty (30) days prior to adoption. The district-wide and building-level plans may be adopted by the Board of Education only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents/guardians, students, and any other interested parties. This plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

***While linked to the District-Wide Safety Plan, the Building-Level Safety Plans shall be deemed 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.***

Full copies of the District-Wide Safety Plan and Amendments must be submitted to the New York State Education Department upon adoption by the Board of Education.

**Section II: Risk Reduction / Prevention and Intervention**

**A. Prevention / Intervention Strategies**

***Program Initiatives***

The East Greenbush CSD has offered programs and activities for improving communications among students and staff in order to report potentially violent incidents, such as:

- Athletic Programs (soccer, basketball, football, softball, baseball, and others)
- National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) training for all Administrators
- The New York State School Safety Guide (2013, with 2015 revision)
- Dignity For All Students (DASA) training
- Utilization of the Safe Schools Helpline for reporting potential violent incidents
- A School Resource Officer (from the East Greenbush PD) is stationed at Columbia HS.
- The Guidance Departments and school Social Workers work with students.
- Use of School Messenger for anonymous reporting via the district website.

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

The East Greenbush CSD 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-hazard incidents. All drills required by the New York State Education Department are satisfied annually. The district has established the following procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students:

- The District will submit certification to the New York State Education Department that all district and school staff have undergone annual training on the emergency response plan, and that the school safety training includes components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year will receive training within thirty (30) days of hire. The district will certify that all school staff receives this training by September 15<sup>th</sup> of each year, or within thirty (30) days of hire, whichever is sooner.
- Full participation in the Annual Early Dismissal – Go Home Evacuation Drill.
- Full participation in eight (8) Fire Drills annually.
- Full participation in four (4) Lockdown Drills annually.
- Full participation in two (2) Shelter-In-Place Drills annually.
- Full participation in two (2) Lockout Drills annually.
- Full participation (when time permits) for an Evacuation / Accountability Drill.
- The Transportation Department conducts three (3) bus drills annually.
- The District-Wide Safety Committee meets five (5) times a year to discuss school safety.
- Building-Level Safety Teams meet to discuss school safety and school climate.
- The District's Schools will conduct tabletop drills with input from local law enforcement, local fire departments, and local EMS agencies.

Note: Following each drill, there will be a debriefing to discuss the exercises and determine if changes need to be made to the emergency response plan. Notes will be taken to assist with the evaluation process.

### ***Implementation of School Security***

The East Greenbush CSD has developed policies and procedures related to school building security, including the following:

- All schools have a locked single point of entry through which employees and visitors enter.
- All staff must wear photo ID badges while in school buildings.
- All visitors must sign-in and put on a visitor sticker before entering school.
- Security cameras monitor school entrances and surrounding areas.
- A police officer from the East Greenbush Police Department will serve as the School Resource Officer every day at Columbia High School. *(Please see Reference # 3 for more information.)*
- A police officer from the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office will serve as the School Resource Officer every day at Howard L. Goff Middle School. *(Please see Reference # 3 for more information.)*
- District-employed security personnel monitor Columbia High School during school days and evenings.

- The cameras at each building are monitored 24/7 by the East Greenbush Emergency Communications Center at East Greenbush Town Hall.
- All employees must be fingerprinted and pass a thorough background check before starting work in the District.
- Students must adhere to the District’s [Code of Conduct](#), which contains information on the range of consequences that may be imposed if students misbehave. This information is reviewed with students each year during the opening weeks of school.
- Safety training is provided annually during Superintendent’s Conference Days. The Safety Training for all school district personnel will be reported via the BEDS reporting forms (online submission) for the current school year. All school personnel must be trained in the emergency response plans, violence prevention, and mental health awareness by September 15 of the current school year, or within 30 days of hire.
- An annual safety audit will be conducted with the Districtwide Safety Coordinator and Building Administration.

**Note: Policies and procedures are continually being evaluated and shaped by real-life experiences (such as bomb threats, forced entry into school buildings, and violent behavior by students, to name a few) and the District-Level and Building-Level plans will continue to evolve as such.**

***Vital Education Agency Information***

The East Greenbush Central School District consists of seven (7) education facilities and a transportation center.

**B. Hazard Identification**

The identification of sites of potential emergencies are located in on page 5 of the Building-Level Safety Plans.

**Section III: Response**

**A. Notification and Activation of Internal and External Communications**

The district policies and procedures for contacting local law enforcement in the event of an emergency or violent incident are located in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. Each plan identifies individuals who are authorized to initiate contact with local law enforcement agencies. All communications during an incident at a school building will flow through the Incident Command Center. Emergency services will be requested via 9-1-1.

In the event of an emergency, staff, students and visitors will be notified in one or more of the following manners:

- |                                     |                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Telephone (landline and cellular) | - School Portable Radios |
| - Bus Radios                        | - Intercom               |
| - Runner with Verbal Message        | - E-mail                 |
| - Automated Notification Message    | - Social Media           |
| - News Media                        |                          |

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 Building Principal (or his/her designee) and provide them with information regarding the situation.

Procedures for notifying parents/guardians is outlined in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. This includes the use of an Automated Notification Message, E-mail, and/or the use of the local media.

**B. Situational Responses**

The District has developed multi-hazard emergency response plans. These guidelines are present in the Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The emergencies addressed in these plans include, but are not limited to,

Active Shooters	Bomb Threat	Biological Hazards
Civil Unrest	Fire / Smoke	Hazardous Materials Release
Hostage Situation	Intruder	Kidnapping
Mass Illness / Pandemic	Missing Student(s)	Natural Gas Leaks
Natural Hazards / Severe Weather / Extreme Weather	Power Failure / Power Outage	Structural Compromise / Collapse
Terrorist Threats / Online Threats	Water Problems	

(Other emergencies may be added by the Building Principals.)

In addition to having plans to address specific hazards, our plans also include procedures that would be used during an emergency. These procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Shelter-In-Place
- Hold-In-Place
- Evacuate
- Lockout
- Lockdown
- Duck / Cover / Hold (Severe Weather)
- Carbon Monoxide Alarm Procedures
- Fire Alarm Procedures

These 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 area of safety
- Assembling the emergency response team and implementing the incident command system
- Notifying school administrators and the District Emergency Response Team of an incident
- Community / parent notification
- Sheltering and student release procedures
- Aftermath and recovery

***Responding to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats***

The Crisis Response Plan and the Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Plans in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on the district's policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students (including to themselves), teachers, other school personnel, or visitors to the school.

The following procedures are addressed in the plan, and may be used by district:

- Implementation of the Threat Assessment Teams at each building. Each Threat Assessment Team will thoroughly investigate any and all threats made.
- Contacting parents/guardians in the event of a direct or implied of violence by a student against themselves, including the threat of suicide.
- The use of staff trained in de-escalation or other methods to diffuse a situation.
- The filing of a DASA (Dignity for All Students Act) form in the event of a bullying incident.
- Informing the Building Principal of a threat of violence (direct or implied).
- Determining the threat level with the District Emergency Response Team.
- Activating the District-Level and/or Building-Level Risk Assessment Team.
- Contacting local law enforcement if needed.
- Monitoring the situation until the situation is resolved.

### ***Acts of Violence / Other Emergencies***

The Crisis Response Plan, the Threat Assessment Plan, and the Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Plans in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on the district's policies and procedures for responding to violence by students, teachers, other school personnel, or visitors to the school.

The following procedures are addressed in the plan, and may be used by district:

- Determine the level of the threat with the District Emergency Response Team or the Building-Level Emergency Response Team.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate surrounding areas.
- Inform the Building Principal and the District Emergency Response Team.
- If necessary, initiate a lockdown, shelter-in-place, or a lockout and contact local law enforcement.
- Monitor the situation. Initiate early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuation procedures as needed.
- Emergency Responders have access to each school building via a designated door that can be remotely unlocked through the Rensselaer County Emergency Communications Center.

**Note: The East Greenbush CSD's "Code of Conduct" outlines policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence.**

### ***Response Procedures***

The Incident Command System, as well as the Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Plans in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on how to respond to various emergencies.

- Identification of decision-makers (Incident Command Team)
- Plans to safeguard students and staff
- Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary
- Procedures to notify parents/guardians
- Procedures to notify the media
- Debriefing procedures

### ***Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government***

A section on Emergency Communications in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance for obtaining assistance during emergencies. During an emergency, the following may occur:

- The Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) will contact the local law enforcement center via 9-1-1 or other emergency number. The dispatcher and first responders will determine services needed by the school.
- The Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) will contact Questar III BOCES.
- The Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) will contact the highest-ranking village, town, or county official (as needed) to provide notification or request assistance.

### ***Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials***

The district will use the policies and procedures in the Incident Command System sections in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan to obtain advice and assistance from local government officials (village, town, county) who are responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law.

The types of procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local governments could include the following:

- The Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) will contact the highest-ranking village, town, or county official (as needed) to provide notification or request assistance.
- The District may utilize the Town of East Greenbush DPW, the Town of North Greenbush DPW, the Town of Schodack DPW, the Village of Nassau DPW, the American Red Cross of Northeastern New York, the Rensselaer County Bureau of Health, the local police departments, fire departments, and EMS agencies.

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

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan includes a checklist which identifies the district resources available in the event of an emergency. This is adapted from the New York State School Safety Guide, 2013 Edition, with the 2015 Revision.

Such items may include, but are not limited to, available facilities, blankets, cots, food supplies, communications equipment, fire extinguishers, first aid supplies, flashlights, bullhorns, district vehicles, and buses.

### ***Procedures to Coordinate the Use of District Resources and Personnel During Emergencies***

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides a description of the district's procedures to coordinate the use of resources and personnel during emergencies.

These sections include the identification of school officials authorized to make decisions and the staff members assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.

### ***Protective Action Options***

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, as well as policies and procedures set forth by the Superintendent of Schools, describes the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate: school cancellation prior to the start of school, early dismissal, evacuation before, during, and after school hours, and sheltering procedures.

## **Section IV: Recovery**

### **A. District Support for Buildings**

Each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides a listing of resources that the Building Level Emergency Response Team, the District Level Emergency Response Team, and the Post Incident Emergency Response Team can utilize with the East Greenbush CSD in the event of an emergency.

The District's Incident Command System identifies those available to make decisions, and those available to relieve team members, and interfaces with the District's Crisis Response Plan to provide team members the opportunity to debrief, distress, and rehab in a controlled environment.

**Note: The Rensselaer County REST Team (Reduce Emergency Stress Team) is available by calling 518-270-5252 and asking that the REST Team Coordinator be contacted.**

The plans allow for the rotation of personnel to maintain sufficient manpower during the entire school emergency operation.

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

The Administrators involved in the Post-Incident Response Team (Crisis Management Team) will work with the School Psychologist, Guidance Counselors, School Social Workers, the Health Office, and the School Resource Officer to coordinate and implement disaster mental health services for those affected by a disaster, crisis, and/or an act of violence.

The East Greenbush CSD will utilize the mental health services of Questar III BOCES, Rensselaer County, and neighboring school districts as needed.

A debriefing of the incident will take place to evaluate the response and address the future needs of the East Greenbush CSD.

## **References**

**While linked to the District-Wide School Safety Plan, references shall remain 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, Sections §2801-a and 807.**

### **Reference # 1:**

The listing of all school buildings covered by the District-Wide School Safety Plan with the addresses of the building, contact names and telephone numbers for building staff, classroom emergency plan, and evacuation plans are listed in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. This shall be updated annually.

**Reference # 2:**

A listing of various law enforcement agencies that have copies of the Building-Level School Safety Plan are included within the Building-Level School Safety Plan. This shall be updated annually.

All materials herein are in accordance with the following:

- New York State Education Law §2801-a
- New York State Education Law Section 807
- New York State Commissioner’s Regulations Sections 155.3, 155.7, and 155.17
- Article 6 of the New York State Public Officer’s Law
- Article 2-B of the New York State Executive Law

**Reference # 3:**

Pursuant to the amendments made to New York State Education Law §2801-a (which, in turn, comes from the required implementation of Section 32 of Part YYY of Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2019), effective July 1, 2019, the East Greenbush Central School District hereby establishes a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the utilization of School Resource Officers in the District.

This MOU will be developed with input from stakeholders including, but not limited to, parents, students, school administrators, teachers, collective bargaining units, parent and student organizations, community members, as well as probation officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and courts that are familiar with school discipline.

The MOUs between the East Greenbush Central School District and the East Greenbush Police Department and the Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Department appear on the next pages.

**Reference # 4:**

The District acknowledges that the Board of Education approved a Pandemic COOP (Continuity of Operations) Plan on April 14, 2021, as prescribed by New York State Law. This is posted on the school district webpage for reference. This continues in effect for the 2022-2023 school year.

*The template for this plan is adapted (with their written permission and our gratitude) from the Saratoga Springs Central School District.*

Revised May 25, 2022

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_