



YONKERS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Emergency Response Plan
Districtwide School Safety Plan
2021-2022

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Purpose

The purpose of the Emergency Response Plan, hereinafter referred to as the ERP is to provide all stakeholders with safety planning, emergency preparedness and response guidelines, vital information, communication procedures, and standardized measures to protect all members of the school community, including students, staff and visitors in the event of an emergency. As a standard operating guideline, there is no implied performance guarantee.

The standardized ERP has been prepared for all Yonkers Public School and buildings, (hereinafter referred to as "District") facilities to provide the framework for a coordinated approach to preparedness, response, and recovery procedures. The ERP also serves as a model for all District schools by providing the guidelines to be modified to the specific needs and resources unique to each building.

The District's ERP has been developed in coordination with local authorities and emergency responders, providing a common platform, which will be referenced in a collaborative response in the event of an emergency. The development of the ERP included a systematic investigation and analysis of potential hazards, which could affect schools throughout the District, an assessment of the capabilities in the District, City of Yonkers and County of Westchester to deal with potential problems resulting from an Emergency or Disaster.

The ERP describes in detail the centralized direction of requests for assistance and the understanding that the governmental jurisdiction most affected by an emergency is required to involve itself prior to requesting assistance. Accordingly, each school in the District will prepare separate plans and operating procedures, which form part of the overall Yonkers Public School District ERP.

Objectives

1. Protect the safety and well-being of all community members, students, staff and visitors
2. Provide for a safe and coordinated response in an emergency situation
3. Protect the District's schools, facilities and assets
4. Allow the District to mitigate any disruption to the educational process in a timely manner
5. Provide for interoperability within the District Incident Command Center and schools
6. Provide for timely communication between the District and all stakeholders, including local authorities and all media outlets
7. Provide for compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Scope

The emergency response plan encompasses all District schools, buildings and programs within the City of Yonkers, and any other leased property in the event of any situation, which could be identified as an emergency, and/or which presents any potential imminent danger to persons upon the property.

Authority

The District Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is activated by the Chief Emergency Officer (Superintendent of Schools and/or their designee) and is implemented at the time of an emergency situation.

School building level incident commanders, (Principal and/or their designee) may activate specific building emergency response plans in the event of an emergency.

Building level incident commanders (Principal and/or their designee) are authorized to activate this plan and/or their building specific plan in the event of an emergency, and/or to protect the safety of any persons upon District properties.

New York State Commissioner of Education Regulations (155.17) requires each school district to maintain a written District Emergency Management Plan and Building Level Emergency Response Plans, and that those plans are uploaded each year through the New York State Department of Education BEDS portal to be reviewed and updated annually by October 15th of each year.

District Emergency Operations Protocols

The District has developed specific procedures encompassing emergency preparedness and response, to include, but not limited to:

- Safety of all persons is of the utmost importance and will be given priority consideration, in all aspects of emergency operations and will include compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee is the Incident Commander. In the event of an emergency during school hours students and staff will not be dismissed without the direction and approval of the Superintendent, his/her designee and/or Incident Commander. Students will be released systemically in accordance with the established procedures of the Standard Re-unification Method, from their respective school, or a designated secondary location under the direction of the Incident Commander
- The National Incident Management System, hereinafter referred to as (NIMS) shall be the designated response platform utilized by the District, in compliance with recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security and the United States Department of Education.
- The District School Safety and Security Department shall maintain the responsibility to be the lead department in an annual collaborative review and update of the District ERP, to include City of Yonkers and local and state authorities and essential District support departments.

Each School and building will maintain a designated Incident Commander, (Principal and/or designee) who will direct the implementation and review of the individual building emergency response plan.

- Each school building will maintain a building level safety team, which will review the building level plan on an annual basis and submit updates to the plan as necessary, encompassing assignments to emergency response roles for select staff members.

- At the opening of school for the year, the building level incident commander will review the school building emergency response plan and procedures with all staff, and may request volunteers who may possess specialized training to join the building safety team. Each District staff member shall be provided with training relative to the ERP by September 15th of each school year.
- The building level emergency response plans, specifying individual roles and contact information shall be regularly updated and forwarded to the District School Safety and Security Department in a timely manner, for submission as required by regulations.
- The District School Safety and Security Department will function in a support role for the building level emergency response plans.

School Safety Program

The District maintains an inclusive school safety program which is comprised of five major components consisting of: *prevention, protection, mitigation, emergency response and recovery*. Each of these components should be adequately addressed within the District ERP and the building level ERP.

The Director of School Safety and Security is the designated individual to govern the District wide safety program and to assist building level safety teams with the development, implementation and training requirements associated with the building level ERP. Each school safety team provides the coordination, review and update of the ERP within their respective building.

Chief Emergency Officer

The District Chief Emergency Officer shall be the Superintendent of Schools and/or his designee. The District Chief Emergency Officer shall be responsible for the coordination, support and implementation of the District ERP. The District Chief Emergency Officer shall also provide support to the building level administration in all aspects of safety issues and emergency management; additionally ensure that staff and students receive annual training.

Security Surveillance Camera Systems Network

The District utilizes an internet protocol networked security surveillance camera system, allowing for the observation of District facilities for the protection of students, staff, visitors and District assets. The School Safety and Security Department is responsible for the direction of the security surveillance camera network, its maintenance and recordings. The School Safety and Security Department is responsible for the primary monitoring of the security cameras and will in the event of an emergency collaborate with the City of Yonkers Police Department to direct the operation of cameras to protect the safety and security of all persons.

District Emergency Response Team

The Superintendent of Schools will designate a District Emergency Response Team, which will be available to respond within the District to provide support to any District site in the event of an emergency.

School Safety Team

The building level school safety team shall be maintained to advise the building principal on all aspects of safety planning to include: *prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery*, specific to the respective school building. The team is responsible for making recommendations addressing any issue which may pose a potential hazard to the daily operation of the school. Additionally will update the building plan accordingly to share with all staff prior to September 15 of each school year. The team shall also be responsible to meet regularly to review and update the building level ERP, and provide any updates to District School Safety and Security.

Program Coordination

The Director of School Safety and Security and/or his designee are responsible for establishing general emergency response operations guidelines for all District schools and facilities to insure safety.

Respective building administrators are responsible for submitting updated building level emergency management plans and updated ERP plans to the School Safety and Security Department no later than September 1, of each school year. The School Safety and Security Department is responsible for sharing that information with the City of Yonkers Police and Fire Departments, the New York State Police and the New York State Education Department on an annual basis, in compliance with existing regulations.

Mission Areas

The District safety program is comprised of five mission areas: *Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery*, to provide a safe and secure learning environment.

Prevention

The District has established precautionary measures in place to prevent a threatened or actual incident from occurrence.

Safety Staffing

School Safety and Security Department employs New York State Certified uniformed security guards, referred to as Public Safety Officers within District schools to provide a visible deterrent to any potential threat and/or crime. The Public Safety Officers are subject to clearance of both New York State Education Department and New York State Department of State fingerprint background check requirements prior to being employed by the District.

All Public Safety Officers complete annual training in de-escalation, mental health, and emergency response from the City of Yonkers Police Department's Training Division. The Public Safety Officers are responsible for all facets of safety and security at the school building level.

Access Control

The District maintains a networked electronic access control system, to regulate access to District school buildings and facilities. The system allows all authorized District employees to access secured schools at any time during their respective duty hours allowing doors to remain locked.

Security Camera Network

The District utilizes an internet protocol networked security surveillance camera system, allowing for the observation of District facilities for the protection of students, staff, visitors and District assets. The District cameras may be monitored at any time allowing for the potential detection of any unauthorized persons upon District properties.

Weapons Detection

The School Safety and Security Department conducts daily administrative entry searches at the District high schools and random administrative entry searches within District schools as needed to prevent weapons from entering schools. The School Safety and Security Department deploys electronic hand held metal detection devices as needed upon a random basis within District high schools and middle schools, to insure student safety. Specially trained Public Safety Officers complete metal detection screening of students and their backpacks/bags in the least intrusive method possible, to deter any weapons from entering District schools.

Protection

The District is committed to employing measures to protect students, staff, visitors, community members and District property and assets from any threat and/or hazard internal or external.

Single Point of Entry

Each District school building operates under a uniform Single Point of Entry (SPOE) procedure to enhance school safety. All students enter from designated entrances that are actively supervised by school staff. Once the students have started the academic school day, the SPOE is locked, along with all other entrances and electronic access control is utilized to allow District staff members to enter the otherwise secured building.

Anonymous Tips

The District provides for an electronic platform application, commonly referred to as an “anonymous tips app” to be in place within the District to provide any student, staff member, any person in a parental role, or any community stakeholder, to: anonymously report any threat, safety or security concern directly to District officials for investigation and potential mitigation.

Background Checks

All newly hired District staff members must submit to a fingerprint background check, prior to their placement within a school building, facilitated through the City of Yonkers

Human Resources Department and required by the New York State Education Department. The background clearance also provides a reporting conduit which provides a notification to the District if an employee's clearance status changes. Additionally, all volunteers within the District complete an application process and local background check facilitated by the City of Yonkers Human Resources Department.

Fire/Sheltering In Place Drills

All Schools within the District conduct a proscribed number of Fire Drills and the required Lock Down Drills on an annual basis, as required by New York State Education regulations, allowing students and staff to practice the emergency procedures of the school building. All drills must be accurately documented, and will be documented by the School Safety and Security Department for reporting.

No Trespassing Signage

All District school buildings and facilities maintain clearly visible "No Trespassing" signage upon the exterior of the buildings and adjacent to entrances, to prevent unauthorized persons from entering and/or remaining upon a school campus, as defined under Section 140.10 of the New York State Penal Law.

Visitor Registration

All visitors to any District school must show a valid form of photographic identification during regular school hours and register with District personnel upon entering a school building. Further the visitor will be issued a temporary visitor pass, which they must visibly display while upon the school campus, to prevent any unauthorized persons from entering a school building

Inclement Weather or Emergency Delay and/or School Closing

To protect the physical wellbeing of students of the District, the Superintendent of Schools may delay the opening of schools and or close schools for the instructional day based upon current and/or impending inclement weather conditions or for emergency conditions. The delay and/or closure will be communicated as early as possible, based upon circumstances, and available via all current media outlets, as well as the District website and any other means of mass communications technology in use by the District.

Emergency Radio Communications

The District School Safety and Security Department maintains digital radio contact between the City of Yonkers Emergency Communications Center (911 Center) and the District Director of School Safety and Security to promote active communications of any real and/or perceived threat or hazard, which may potentially impact school and personal safety. The District also maintains a paging system for mass notification throughout the District.

District Wide/Community Communications

The District utilizes all available means of electronic communications technology to include but not limited to: The District website, directed reverse telephone contact capability automatic calls, directed text and e-mail messaging, posting on social media sites, along with other emergent technologies in order to keep all stakeholders and community members informed of events which may impact student and/or community safety.

Facilities Safety Inspections

The District Facilities Management Department conducts an annual visual inspection of the physical condition and infrastructure of all school buildings, noting the condition of the facility and reporting the same to the District Board of Education and the New York State Department of Education.

Schools Fire Safety Inspections

Members of the City of Yonkers Fire Department conduct random, monthly fire safety inspections of all of the District school buildings to identify and mitigate any potential fire hazards. Additionally, the City of Yonkers Fire Department, Fire Marshall, conducts a comprehensive fire safety inspection of all of the District schools and buildings in conjunction with the District Facilities Management Department to identify and mitigate any potential fire hazards, enhancing personal safety for students and staff.

Response

The District is committed to the utilization of all of the personnel and physical resources which it maintains to respond to any emergency to stabilize the situation and establish a safe and secure environment for all persons.

Emergency Management

Each District school building maintains an emergency response plan which is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The District also maintains a District emergency response plan, which is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Incident Command

The District has initiated an Incident Command Course for Schools training, through the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency, to be available for completion by all members of each school building administrative team.

School Safety Team

Each District school maintains a School Safety Team, comprised of staff members who may possess specialized training and/or skills, which meet regularly to discuss pertinent safety issues, potential hazards and are assigned to respond within a specific role in the event of an emergency.

School Nurse Program

Each District school is staffed by a certified New York State School Nurse who is trained to provide medical attention in the event of an emergency, and provide first responder treatment in order to stabilize any sustained injuries.

Mutual Aid

The District School Safety and Security Department maintains a line of communication with the City of Yonkers Police Department, the City of Yonkers Fire Departments, the Westchester County Police and with the New York State Police, in order to provide additional resources in the event of an emergency.

Recovery

The District will utilize all available capabilities to assist any District building which has been affected by an emergency, to restore a safe learning environment.

Recovery Mutual Aid

The District may request the assistance of city, county, state and federal government resources to assist in the security and the recovery of the District operations in the event of an emergency, which exceeds the Districts available resources and capabilities.

Critical Incident Debriefing

The District shall complete a critical incident debriefing with all staff and responders involved upon the completion of the incident and response. A standardized record will be completed and forwarded to the School Safety and Security Department for review.

Re-Unification

The District shall plan for re-unification of students which may potentially be evacuated from within their respective school setting in the event of an actual and/or perceived threat or emergency. The designated District plan is the Standard Re-unification Method (SRM) and shall provide parents/guardians with information relative to the designated site to which they must respond to be re-united with their student(s), via the approved District Office of Public Information and utilizing all means of mass communications and media outlets. Parents/guardians will be required to show a valid form of government issued photo identification, prior to the student being released to them.