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To: District Superintendents of BOCES
           Superintendents of Public School Districts Outside NYC
           Principals of Public Schools Outside NYC

From: Kathleen R. DeCataldo

Subject: Updating and Submitting 2023-24 School Year Building-Level Emergency Response Plans
           and Information Related to District-Wide School Safety Plans

This memo includes important information about updating and submitting building-level emergency response plans and information related to district-wide school safety plans for the 2023-24 school year. As appropriate, please share this information with members of your district-wide school safety team and/or building-level emergency response team.

As recent tragedies in schools have demonstrated, the importance of having a plan in place for how the school and community will respond in an emergency cannot be over-emphasized. Education Law §2801-a and Commissioner's Regulation §155.17 require that each public school and BOCES develop and annually update a confidential building-level Emergency Response Plan (ERP) that includes details about how school personnel and students would respond to different types of emergency situations that may occur in their school. In addition, each public school district, BOCES and charter school must also develop and annually update a district-wide school safety plan that provides critical information to parents, educators and the school community about the policies and procedures that are in place related to school safety.

Recent Changes to Requirements

On June 23, 2022, Governor Hochul signed Alyssa's Law, Chapter 227 of the Laws of 2022, which amends Education Law 2801-a to require schools to consider silent panic alarm systems when reviewing and amending district and school safety plans. The requirement became effective immediately. Safety teams should document their process for considering installing panic alarm systems under the requirements of Alyssa's Law. If a school chooses to implement a panic alarm system, details about the actual function of such systems should be incorporated in the appropriate portions of the confidential building-level ERP.

At the September 2022 meeting of the Board of Regents, Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 was amended to require districts add emergency remote instruction provisions to their annual district-wide school safety plan beginning with the 2023-24 school year. The plan must address six different regulatory components related to how they will provide remote instruction under emergency conditions. Additional information about remote instruction plans is available in the guidance memo and the Department's Emergency Remote Instruction Plan FAQs. Questions on emergency remote instruction plans may be sent to the Office of Educational Design and Technology at edtech@nysed.gov or 518-474-5461.

Resources

New resources include the Emergency Response Planning Video Series that consists of 13 short video modules designed to support districts and schools in developing their district-wide school safety plan and their building-level emergency response plan. The videos include a process for reviewing and revising your plans, information on the required content for the plans, and tips for submitting the plans. The Plan Development Resource Packet for Districts and Schools includes detailed information about developing safety plans, including worksheets for developing annexes, post-drill review forms, how to design tabletop exercises, and more. We have also developed two self-assessment checklists that are easy-to-use overviews of the requirements with suggested considerations when planning for emergencies – there is one for the building-level emergency response plan, and one for the district-wide plan.   The Quick Guide to Emergency Response Planning Requirements gives side-by-side comparison of requirements for the district-wide school safety plan and the building-level emergency response plan. The NY State Emergency Response Terms "card" has recently been updated with pictographs that add a visual component to the Shelter-in-Place, Hold-in-Place, Evacuate, Lockout and Lockdown terminology and recommended actions.

In addition, we created a four video series to guide school and district officials in preparing for, conducting, and assessing your lockdown drill practices, called Lockdown Drills 101: Preparing For, Conducting, and Assessing Your Practices as well as a resource to assist school and district leaders in developing and providing annual required training to all staff in violence prevention, mental health and the emergency response plan. The Initial Annual Safety Plan Training resource is a recorded slide presentation designed to provide an overview of student mental health, violence prevention, and includes prompts to guide your school or district through providing an overview to staff of **your** district-wide school safety plan and building-level emergency response plan. The Initial Annual Safety Plan Training includes opportunities for school and/or district leaders to facilitate discussion among training participants, and to review school and district protocols and safety procedures.

There are also videos on Developing and Enhancing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with your Community Partners which will help schools and districts that have School Resource Officers or security, or offsite evacuation sites or arrangements with another community resource as part of safety procedures. The Incident Command System (ICS) for Schools provides an overview of the ICS system and roles, an integral part of safety plans, and a resource that will help school and district leaders review the plan and procedures critically for the purpose of Integrating the Needs of Students and Staff with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs in your plans.

There are many more resources related to school safety, the Dignity for All Students Act, and creating safe and supportive school environments on our [Center for School Safety webpage](). If you have questions, please contact the office of Student Support Services at: [SafetyPlans@nysed.gov]() or contact the [Center for School Safety]().

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans

As noted above, each public school, charter school and BOCES school building is required to develop and annually update a <u>confidential</u> building-level ERP that includes information about the school, key staff, floor plans, maps, and detailed response procedures for different types of emergency situations. The plan must be in place by September 1 each year and must be submitted to both the state police and local law enforcement within 30 days of adoption, but no later than October 1. Schools fulfill the requirement to submit building-level ERPs to the state police by submitting their plan electronically via the SED Monitoring application accessed through the [New York State Education Department (NYSED) Business Portal]().

At this time, school officials must contact local law enforcement directly to comply with the requirement to submit the building-level ERP to local law enforcement. In addition, local law enforcement must be a part of the required Building-Level Emergency Response Team.

Important reminders regarding developing and submitting the plan:

- The plan must include all minimum required elements, as outlined in the [Building-Level Emergency Plans Self-Assessment Checklist]().

- In circumstances when a single physical building contains multiple "schools" or "programs," the safety team(s) should be inclusive of all grades, schools, and programs located in the building and the team should develop one emergency plan per physical building that is inclusive of all grades and programs located in the building.

- School administrators must include information about each local law enforcement agency the plan was submitted to and the date the ERP was submitted; 10-digit phone numbers, including area code, must be provided.

- Every school ERP must include functional annexes for how the school will implement their plan of action in response to an emergency (Shelter-in Place, Hold-in-Place, Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuation, Crime Scene Management, Communications, Public Health, Medical and Mental Health, Accounting for All Persons, Family Reunification, Security, and Cybersecurity). Required functional annexes must be complete and should not include the use of codes, colors or cards.

- It is required that each school submit a pdf document containing building floor plans, and a pdf document containing a map of the school grounds and surrounding area. You may utilize an application like Google Maps to generate a pdf document that contains an area/satellite map. The documents must be readable and clear with entrances and exits clearly marked. Do not submit electronic copies of hand-drawn plans. We have developed a [tip sheet]() to help you create maps and floor plans that provide essential information that may be needed by first responders in an emergency.

- When identifying personnel to fulfill Incident Command System (ICS) roles, it is recommended that your team identify staff to fulfill key roles who are on-site daily, and that your team does not designate the same staff person to fulfill multiple roles. Please consider designating an alternate for each role.

District-Wide School Safety Plans

By September 1 each year, every school district, BOCES and charter school must develop/update and, after appropriate board review and public comment period, adopt a comprehensive district-wide school safety plan.[1] To comply with the requirement that the plan be filed with the Commissioner, each school district, charter school and BOCES is directed to post their district-wide school safety plan on the district website and submit the web address/URL to the Department no later than October 1 each year via the Safe Schools collection in SED monitoring.

Important reminders to consider:

- The plan must include all minimum required elements as outlined in the District-Wide School Safety Plan Self-Assessment Checklist, including a copy of the board-adopted written contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that defines the roles and areas of responsibility of school personnel, security personnel and law enforcement in response to student misconduct that violates the code of conduct for school districts and charter schools that employ, contract with, or otherwise retain law enforcement or public or private security personnel, including school resource officers. For additional information, see the September 5, 2019 memo regarding this requirement.

- Safety teams must include all required members as described in the in the District-Wide School Safety Plan Self-Assessment Checklist.

- It is required that the district-wide school safety plan be adopted by the school board by September 1 each school year. Prior to adoption, the district-wide school safety plan must be shared at a public meeting and posted for public comment for a minimum of 30 days. Note that reports submitted to the Department that do not reflect a 30-day public comment period, or a board adoption date that occurs before the end of the public comment period, will be returned to the district to resolve, with explanation, and then must be resubmitted. LEAs should consult with their school attorneys regarding meeting these requirements. In addition, information about public meetings law is available in a publication from the Department of State.

- The district-wide school safety plan must be posted on the LEA website in a location that is readily accessible to parents and the public (such as on a page describing school safety procedures).

- After the plan has been adopted and posted on your district website, you must report the following to NYSED via the Safe Schools collection in SED Monitoring:
    - contact information for the chief emergency officer;
    - the URL for the district-wide school safety plan;

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[1] Charter schools will receive separate notification regarding how to submit their plans.

- o the URL for the Emergency Remote Instruction Plan (if the Emergency Remote Instruction Plan is included as part of the district-wide school safety plan, report the URL for the districtwide school safety plan for this question.)
- o date of public board meeting, start and end dates of public comment period, and date of board adoption; and
- o certification that by September 15, all district and school staff have undergone annual training in the emergency response plan, school violence prevention and mental health. A resource to assist districts in developing and delivering this training is available on the Center for School Safety website at https://www.nyscfss.org/annual-safety-login.

Thank you for all you do to keep students and staff safe every day. If you have questions about these requirements, or suggestions for how NYSED may better support schools in this area, please contact the office of Student Support Services at SafetyPlans@nysed.gov.

**Instructions for Submitting Building-Level Emergency Response Plans &
District-Wide School Safety Plans in the SED Monitoring Application**

Building-level emergency response plans (ERPs): must be submitted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of each school.

District-wide school safety plans must be submitted by the CEO of each LEA (school district, BOCES, or charter school), as outlined below.

1. Go to **https://portal.nysed.gov/**
2. Click on the **"Log In"** button
3. Enter your existing SEDDAS username and password
4. Under the heading **"My Applications,"** click the link to **"SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System"**
5. **For School Building-Level ERPs** –principals (and designated staff) will see **School ERP"** in the inbox that appears in SED Monitoring. BOCES principals will see **"BOCES ERP"** in the inbox. Click **"View"** to enter and review data.
    a) All floor plans and area maps must be uploaded as a .pdf document
    b) It is recommended that you save your changes frequently
    c) It is not required that you enter all data at once; you can save your changes and finish at a later time
    d) The CEO of the school or district/BOCES must submit when information is complete

6. **For the District-Wide School Safety Plan** – in the inbox that appears in SED Monitoring, public school superintendents, district superintendents, and charter school leaders will see **"LEA District Safety Plan URL and Information."** Click **"View"** to enter and review data.

** The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of each public school district, public school, charter school and BOCES and BOCES building as recorded in SEDREF (https://portal.nysed.gov/pls/sedrefpublic/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw$.startup) has been entitled to enter information into SED Monitoring and the School Building ERPs Safe Schools electronic application in SEDDAS.

If the CEO information in SEDREF is incorrect for your school, please update it by following the instructions found here: http://www.oms.nysed.gov/sedref/home.html.