

OnTECH Charter High School 2024-2025 School Safety Plan

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PART ONE: BUILDING LEVEL (SUMMARY) SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Emergencies in schools must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. Schools are at risk of acts of violence, and natural and manmade disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses prevention, response and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in schools.

Charter Schools are considered districts in and of themselves. Therefore, even as just one school with just one building, we are required to have both District and Building Level Project SAVE School Safety Plans. This document is OnTECH Charter High School's combined District-Wide and Building-Level Project SAVE School Safety Plans—with the confidential details of the Building Level Plan included as a separate Appendix.

OnTECH supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to engage in a robust planning process as soon as it is practicable. This planning process includes meetings with parents, local police, security, school staff, and students to request participation in revising the plan, and feedback in reviewing each year's plan. All constituencies have full access for input.

The School Safety Plan was developed by the Building Response Team - which includes students, family, staff, and local police.

Our goal in creating and implementing our School SAVE Safety Plan is:

- To create an atmosphere and set of practices that prevent violence or unsafe conditions
- To create/implement a plan that will minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies
- To have an effective response plan for all predictable safety concern situations
- To produce a document that can be used as the basis for informing and training all school constituencies regarding keeping our school safe.

Plans are produced for the following (multi-hazard) situations: Fire, Intruder Alert, Bomb scare, Medical Emergency, Gas Leak, Civil Disturbance and include plans for Rapid Dismissal.

KEY SCHOOL DATA

810 Willis Avenue
Syracuse, New York 13204
315-396-0558

Head of School: Ellen Eagen

CFO: Mark Chudzicki

Director of Operations: Karl Joyner

Director of Facilities: Juler Wah

Student Transportation: Syracuse City School District/First Student and partner districts Transportation Departments.

SECTION I GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The School Safety (SAVE) Plan has been developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Board of Directors (the 'Board'), a School Safety Team was created and charged with the development and maintenance of a School Safety Plan ('Plan'). This Plan includes input from parents, students, staff, and school safety and other personnel.

The Plan was developed by the Building Response Team (BRT) through a series of meetings attended by constituencies outlined above, following Safety Plan guidelines distributed by NYSED. The BRT will review emergency response plans with security professionals and consult with other schools with high quality SAVE plans to ensure feasibility and thoroughness.

Our goal in creating this plan is to ensure the maximum safety of all students and staff at our school through careful and well thought through planning. We will conduct table-top and actual drills to facilitate organized and effective use of these plans in the case of an actual emergency.

BUILDING RESPONSE TEAM

The Building Response Team is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives from the Board of Directors, Administration, Parents, Students, Faculty, School safety personnel, and other school personnel as follows:

Building Response Team (Fall 2023)

Team Leader: Karl Joyner (Director of Operations)

CFO/HR: Mark Chudzicki

Principal: Dawn W. Cejas

Founder/Head of School: Ellen Eagen

Director of Facilities: Juler Wah

Board of Trustees: Steve Kimatian

Teacher: Sam Vernold

Local Law Enforcement Official

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The initial response to all emergencies will be by the Building Response Team. Upon activation of the Building Response Plan, local emergency officials and the Board of Directors will be notified as appropriate. Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols as required. The BRT will serve as the Emergency Response Team and Post Incident Response Team.

ACCESS TO FLOOR PLANS

A set of floor plans and a diagram indicating School Evacuation sites and the routes students/staff will take to these sites will be provided to local emergency response agencies as part of the BRT Planning process. Every member of the BRT has a copy of floor plans and evacuation route maps, and a copy of each is included in the official BRT Binder (maintained by the Director of Operations and kept in the Main Office).

PLAN REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation Section 155.17(e)(3), a summary of this Plan is made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its annual adoption. We include representatives of all key School constituents and interested parties in the development and review of this plan. The Plan will be formally adopted by the Board. To ensure student safety, the plan is considered ‘in effect’ until a full public review is conducted, and the Plan approved.

In accordance with the August 2011 Amendment to Section 155.7, certain sections of our Safety Plan with response action detail and private contact information will 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 Section 2801-a. Full copies of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be supplied to both local and State Police within 30 days of adoption.

SECTION II: RISK REDUCTION/INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

PREVENTION/INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

OnTECH believes strongly in the wisdom of implementing violence prevention and intervention protocols as a primary means of ensuring student/school safety. These protocols take the form of Prevention Programs, Building Personnel Training, Drills/Exercises/Student Training, School Security Policies and Protocols, Coordination with Local Emergency Officials, and Maintenance of Educational Agency contact information as per the below:

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Programs: anti-bullying programs, violence prevention meetings, conflict resolution sessions and peer mediation, mentoring programs, forums for students concerned about bullying/violence, establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence/ bullying.
- OnTECH creates a positive, safe learning environment for students by implementing a community service program and by creating school schedules that minimize potential for conflicts or altercations.

BUILDING PERSONNEL TRAINING

- In preparation for planning and executing drills, the Building Response Team reviews information/guidance on the NYSED and New York State Center for School Safety websites as well as Safety Plans from other schools.
- When hiring school safety/security personnel, the School ensures all personnel have the appropriate background (experience and training) to fulfill their role, including training in how to de-escalate potentially violent situations.
- The School reviews the details of its Safety Plans with all faculty and staff prior to school opening (including all plan logistics, roles and responsibilities, and back up plans), ensuring all are clear on all roles and responsibilities as well as logistics. Staff will sign off on having reviewed and understood School Safety Plans.
- Multiple members of the Safety Team will take CPR and AED training.

DRILLS/EXERCISES/STUDENT TRAINING

- The Safety Team will conduct ‘tabletop’ exercises – playing through the execution of each of our multi-hazard plans using a school and layout diagram.
- The School will review all emergency response plans with students within the first 2 weeks of school, to ensure all students understand expectations for their action/behavior and that of the entire school community.
- The School will conduct mandated actual safety drills that test components of the School Safety Plan. These drills will be conducted in coordination with local emergency response and preparedness officials.
- The School will contact local officials to announce drills before they start.

SCHOOL SAFETY DRILL SCHEDULE

A minimum of 12 Drills will be conducted during the 2024-2025 school year. At least eight will be evacuation drills and at least four will be lock down/secure location drills. An announced evacuation drill will take place the first 10 days of school as well as an announced lock down/secure location drill. The remaining drills will be unannounced with at least six more occurring before 12/31/24.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL SECURITY POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

School Safety/Security roles are expected to be as follows:

- Staff and Administration will monitor hallways before and after school, and during class change times.
- Only the front door of the school and annex will be open at the start of day.
- Both doors will be monitored by security guards or staff members..
- All school visitors will be required to show identification upon entering the school building, and to wear a school name tag while in the school. As appropriate, visitors will be escorted to classrooms.
- Staff members will use personal phones in the event of an emergency drill or actual occurrence to ensure a means of communication.

COORDINATION WITH EMERGENCY OFFICIALS

The Director of Operations (Building Response Team Leader) will contact local emergency officials to review emergency procedures, to verify contact protocols and information, and to coordinate their involvement in School Safety drills.

MAINTENANCE OF VITAL EDUCATION AGENCY INFORMATION

An updated School Staff contact list will be maintained by the Director of Operations and placed within the School “Emergency/Safety” Binder. This binder will also contain: a list of all local emergency contact names and numbers (police, fire, hospital, Board, local officials), emergency contact information for all school staff, and a sheet with the demographics of the school (number of students, number of staff, organization chart for the school). Included in the binder will be a ‘Student Emergency Contact Binder’ with emergency contact sheets for each student.

EARLY DETECTION OF POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIORS

Guidelines for the early detection of potentially violent behaviors will be disseminated to all school staff in the first week as part of the School Safety Plan review. An age appropriate version of the guidelines will be discussed with students within the first month of school.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Through a walk-through with local police, the Building Safety Team will identify hazardous areas in the building and immediate surroundings.

SECTION III: RESPONSE

ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The chain of command in the case of emergencies is as follows:

1. Director of Operations
2. CFO/HR
3. Founder

CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONS

- In the event of an emergency, the Director of Operations will serve as Incident Commander. The School Incident Commander may be replaced by a member of the local emergency response team.
- After relinquishing command, the School Leader or designee may be asked to serve a support role as part of a Unified Incident Command, if established, by the local emergency response agency.
- The school will follow the Chain of Command outlined above to ensure continuity of operations.

NOTIFICATION AND ACTIVATION (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS)

In the event of an emergency, the following internal and external communications systems will be utilized as makes most sense at the time:

- School Phone system
- Cell Phones of School Safety Team and staff
- Email
- Text messaging
- Local media

STANDARD NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL

Notification of an incident or hazard development must be made to the Director of Operations as soon as possible following its detection. In the event of an emergency, the Director of Operations or BRT Leader will notify all building occupants to take appropriate protective action

Upon the occurrence of violent incidents, the Director of Operations will contact the appropriate local law enforcement officials. A list of local law enforcement officials and contact information will be maintained in the School “Emergency/Safety” Binder in the Main Office. The Director of Operations will also have a soft copy of this document on file, and a hard copy in their office.

In the event of a disaster or violent act, as necessary the Director of Operations will notify all staff via walking to classrooms if immediate communication is required, or via conducting an emergency staff meeting if the situation does not require immediate communication and the President of the Board of Directors via phone or in person as soon as possible after.

As necessary, the School will notify parents of a violent incident or early dismissal through use of email, text or advisory phone chain. Parent contact information will be maintained on Student Emergency Contact forms, and with a school-wide email group.

Note – Families will be instructed on the School website where to find updated information and contact numbers for the school in the event of emergency situations.

The school “Emergency/Safety” Binder will contain:

- Local emergency contact names and numbers (police, fire, hospital, Board Members, local officials),
- Emergency Contact Information for all school staff
- Demographic school information (number of students, number of staff, organization chart for the school).

SITUATIONAL RESPONSES

Plans are in place, and detailed in the appended, separate Building Level Response Plan document for:

- Fire
- Intruder in the Building
- Medical Emergency
- Threat of Violence (by student, staff, visitors, other)
- Explosive/ Bomb Threat
- Hostage/ Kidnapping
- Civil Disturbance
- School Bus Accident
- Gas Leak
- Hazardous Material
- Biological Threat
- Radiological Threat
- Epidemic

RESPONSE TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE

The below plan is in keeping with the OnTECH Charter High School's Community Covenant. In the event of actual violence by any member of the school community or person on school grounds the School will follow the procedure below:

- Injured parties will be taken care of
- Offending individual will be contained
- The Director of Operations, in consultation with the Principal will determine the level of threat
- The immediate area of the act will be isolated and/or evacuated – Lockdown procedures will be activated – Local law enforcement agencies will be notified
- Situation will be monitored, and response adjusted as necessary
- As necessary initiate early dismissal, shelter in place or evacuation procedures

PROTECTIVE ACTION OPTIONS

- Determine level of threat
- Confirm sheltering location
- Evacuate staff and students to pre-arranged sheltering site
- Account for all students and staff populations. Report any missing persons to School Leader
- Make determination regarding early dismissal
- Contact families/transportation providers
- Ensure adult/continued school supervision/security
- Retain appropriate school personnel on site until all students have been returned home/picked up
- Coordinate with local emergency responders.

For all Situations:

Parents - The Director of Operations, in consultation with the Principal will determine if and when parents need to be informed and will do the informing. This will be done in consultation with the leadership team.

Media -The Director of Operations in consultations with the Board of Trustees will determine if and when the media needs to be informed and will do the informing. This will be done in consultation with the full Board.

The Building Response Team - will convene within 48 hours of an event to conduct a Situation Debrief. The debrief process will include soliciting input from other school constituencies as follows: Director of Operations asks for feedback from faculty and students (as appropriate), Director of Operations asks for feedback from other school constituencies (staff, security staff, etc.). The results of this debrief will inform future updates.

PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

As necessary, the Director of Operations, in consultation with the Board Chair, will request assistance from emergency services organizations and local government agencies. Contact names and numbers will be maintained in the School Emergency/ Safety Plan Binder. Soft and hard copies of this contact

information will be maintained in the main office. A record will be maintained of all Local Government Emergency Assistance requests and responses.

SECURITY OF CRIME SCENE

The Director of Operations (Building Response Team Leader) or designee is responsible for crime scene security and crime related evidence until relieved by law enforcement officials.

No item shall be removed, cleaned or altered without prior approval from the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Nothing in this section should be interpreted to preclude the rescue and aid of injured persons.

SECTION IV: RECOVERY

POST INCIDENT RESPONSE

Responses will include, but not be limited to:

Short term:

- Mental health counseling for staff and students
- Building security
- Facility restoration
- Post incident critique
- Mental health counseling for staff and students
- Building security
- Mitigation actions, as appropriate, to reduce the likelihood of repeat occurrence and impact if a similar incident does occur again

DEBRIEF SESSION

After the recovery stage of any incident, the Safety Team will conduct an internal debrief session that includes a re-evaluation of violence prevention and school safety activities as appropriate to improve our plan. Updates to the Safety Plan will be made as appropriate.