SAINT MARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

REGARDING CRISIS INTERVENTION,

EMERGENCY RESPONSE & MANAGEMENT

2019-2020

Mary Jo Aiken
Principal

Authority

The Administration of Saint Mary School recognizes that natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and winter storms, man-made disasters such as fires, chemical accidents and toxic spills, and civil disorders such as bomb threats and hostage situations are potential threats to the safety of the school community.

Therefore, on January 8, 2018 the Board of Limited Jurisdiction of Saint Mary School reviewed/approved the following policy:

> Advance planning for emergencies and disaster is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff should a threat to safety arise from fire or other causes; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that preparedness plans exist and that students and staff have been trained to carry them out.

> The Principal shall develop a school safety plan in compliance with the Commissioner of Education Regulation Section 2801-a, Chapter 16, Title II, Article 55. The plan shall provide for sheltering, evacuation, early dismissal, written notification to parents, students and staff, drills and coordination with local and county emergency preparedness administrators.

> The School Safety Plan for Saint Mary School will be the official guide for the school in case of fire, civil emergencies and natural disasters. All personnel and students will follow policies and procedures set forth in the guide.

Legal Basis for the Plan

This plan is developed in accordance with the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Section 2801-a, Chapter 16, Title II, Article 55 (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/lawsregs/2801a.html), a copy of which is attached as Appendix 4, and in recognition of the legal responsibilities for actions during emergencies set forth in Article 2-B of the New York State Executive Law (http://www.dhses.ny.gov/planning/article-2b.cfm).

Statement of Purpose

This school safety plan is intended to set forth the information required by Saint Mary School staff involved in a school or regional emergency due to the occurrence of a natural or man-made disaster or civil emergency.

This information includes use of warning and communications systems, operating procedures, individual responsibilities, authority structure, resources available, and specific guidelines for the various actions open to the staff of Saint Mary School to protect life and property during and after an emergency.

Assumptions

While it is likely that outside assistance would be available in most serious emergency situations affecting Saint Mary School, it is necessary for the school to plan for and be able to carry out immediate responses during the first stage of an emergency and to be prepared to effectively coordinate resources with the larger community in the event of a more widespread emergency.

In keeping with the nationwide and county strategy of developing an integrated management system, this plan is concerned with all types of emergency situations that may develop. It also accounts for activities before, during, and after emergency operations.

2018-2019 PROJECT *SAVE* PLAN
(SAFE SCHOOLS AGAINST VIOLENCE IN EDUCATION)
BUILDING-LEVEL SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN,
INCLUDING REQUIRED "DISTRICT-WIDE" COMPONENTS
SAINT MARY SCHOOL
DECEMBER 11, 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Emergencies in schools must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. Schools are at risk of acts of violence, 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.

Catholic 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 SAINT MARY SCHOOL's combined District-wide and Building-Level Project SAVE School Safety Plans – with the underline confidential details of the Building Level Plan included as a separate Appendix.

Saint Mary School supports the SAVE Legislation, and has engaged in a robust planning process. This planning process includes meetings with parents, local police, security, School faculty and staff, and students to request participation in creating the plan, and feedback in reviewing the final plan. All constituencies have had full access for input.

The SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Plan was developed by the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team ('Safety Team') - which includes student, family, staff, local police and school safety personnel - for the 2018-2019 School Year.

Our goals in creating and implementing our School Safety (SAVE) Plan are:
- 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 in regard to keeping our school safe.

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

Key School Data:
- SAINT MARY SCHOOL began school in the Fall of 2017 with 196 students in grades Montessori through 8, and 30 Staff
- Address: 6919 Transit Road, East Amherst, NY 14051
- Phone number: 716-689-8242
- Head of School: Father Robert Zilliox
- Principal: Mary Jo Aiken
- Student Transportation – Via Public Transportation, and yellow bus

SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

A. Purpose
1. The SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety (SAVE) Plan has been developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction of SAINT MARY SCHOOL (the 'Board'), a SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team was created and charged with the development and maintenance of a SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Plan ('Plan'). This Plan includes input from parents, students, staff and school safety and other personnel.
2. The Plan was developed by the School Safety Team through a series of meetings attended by constituencies outlined above, following Safety Plan guidelines distributed by NYSED. The Safety Team will review emergency response plans with security professionals and consult with other schools with high quality SAVE plans to ensure feasibility and thoroughness.
3. 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 of included plans to facilitate organized and effective use of these plans in the case of an actual emergency.

B. School Safety Team
The SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives from the Board of Limited Jurisdiction, Administration, Parents, Students, Faculty, School safety personnel, and other school personnel as follows:

School Safety Team (2018)
(* - Core Safety Team Member)

Title	Name	Role
Head of School*	Father Robert Zilliox	School Safety Team Head
Principal*	Mary Jo Aiken	School Safety Team
Director of Operations/ Finance*	Ryan Verity	School Safety Team
Communications Director*	Debbie Lesinski	School Safety Team
Advancement Director*	Stephanie States	School Safety Team
Faith Formation Director*	Karen Smaczniak	School Safety Team
Faculty Member	Emily Horan	School Safety Team
School Safety Personnel*	Don Andres/John Turton	School Safety Team
Security Consultant	Ralph Smario	Advisor/Safety Expert
Parent Representative	Sean Glenn	School Safety Team
Student Representative	Confidential	School Safety Team
Board Representative	Kris Principe	School Safety Team
Local Law Enforcement Official	Sergeant Neil Held	Vulnerability Specialist

C. Concept of Operations
- The initial response to all emergencies at SAINT MARY SCHOOL will be by the Core School Safety Team. Upon activation of the Core School Safety Team, local emergency officials and the Board will be notified as appropriate. Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols as required.
- The Core School Safety Team will also serve as the Emergency Response Team and Post Incident Response Team.

D. 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 School Safety Planning process. Every member of the Core School Safety Team will have a copy of floor plans and evacuation route maps, and a copy of each will be included in the official School Safety Binder (maintained by the Office Manager, and kept in the Main Office).

E. Plan Review and Public Comment
1. Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17(e)(3), a summary of this Plan will be made available. We will include representatives of all key School constituents and interested parties in the development and review of this plan, including a review at our first Parent Teacher Organization (open to the public) in the Winter of 2018.
2. The Plan will be formally adopted by the Board in 2018.
3. In accordance with the August 2016 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.
4. This Plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the Core School Safety Team. The Plan was reviewed and approved by the SAINT MARY SCHOOL

Board in January 2018. The required annual review will be completed on or before September 1 of each year after its adoption by the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Board.

SECTION II: RISK REDUCTION/ INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

SAINT MARY SCHOOL 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
- Character Education Programming
- Anti-bullying Programs
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Programs
- Peer Leadership Programs
- Drug Abuse Resistance Education Programs
- Codes of Conduct
- SAINT MARY SCHOOL will also create a positive, safe learning environment for students by implementing a community service program and creating school schedules that minimize potential for conflicts or altercations.

Facilities Initiatives
- Sign-in procedures and use of visitor ID badges with visual contact.
- Employees use faculty/staff ID badges.
- A single point of access for visitors at each building.
- Installation of interior and exterior surveillance cameras throughout our campuses.
- Key fob distribution to employees to gain building access through door readers.
- When hiring school safety/security personnel, the School will ensure 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 will review the detail 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.
- At least two members of the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team will take CPR and AED training.
- In preparation for planning and executing drills, the Safety Team will review information/guidance on the NYSED and New York State Center for School Safety websites as well as Safety Plans from other schools.

Drills / Exercises/ Training
- The Safety Team will conduct 'table top' exercises – playing through the execution of each of our multi-hazard plans.
- The School will review emergency drills 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 safety drills that test components of the School Safety Plan. These drills will be conducted in coordination with local emergency response and preparedness officials, as needed:

4 lockdown drills, 8 fire/evacuation drills. 8 of which must be conducted by December 31st of each year, the balance must be conducted during the remainder of the school year.

- Topics for training will include general security and safety measures, intervention strategies with difficult or challenging students, building security awareness, and reporting requirements and procedures.

- In the execution of their duties, faculty, aides and monitors shall have responsibility for:
  o Observation of the general property, including the immediate outside area/perimeter of the building(s), with an obligation to report suspicious activity to district or building administration.
  o Overseeing study halls, cafeterias, or other areas of student assemblage with the goal of assisting to maintain an orderly, safe environment.

Implementation of School Security Policies and Protocols
School Safety/Security protocols at SAINT MARY SCHOOL are expected to be as follows:
- At start and end of the school day there will be school staff at bus and drop/off pick up doors
- All building entry doors will be locked during the school day.
- All school visitors will be required to wear a school nametag while in the school. As appropriate, visitors will be escorted to classrooms.
- The School will have security cameras located inside and outside the building.
- There will be a security audit conducted each school year.
- The faculty and Principal will be provided with walkie-talkies to use in the event of an emergency drill or actual occurrence to ensure a means of communication.

Coordination with Emergency Officials
- The Head of School (School Safety Team Head) will contact local emergency officials to review Emergency procedures, and to verify contact protocols and information.

Maintenance of Vital Education Agency Information
An updated School Staff contact list (with cell phone numbers) will be maintained by the Office Manager 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, Board Members), 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). Next to that binder will be a 'Student Emergency Contact Binder' with Emergency Contact sheets for each student.

Hiring and Screening of School Personnel
The following hiring and screening practices are followed for the hiring of all personnel:

Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks
For all employees hired, the School completes a fingerprinting and criminal background check.

Reference Checks
References are thoroughly checked prior to extending an employment offer.
  o Reference checks are made for instructional and non-instructional personnel.
  o Reference checks are completed and reviewed by the administrative team along with the application.

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors
Guidelines for the early detection of potentially violent behaviors will be presented all school staff in August/September as part of the back-to-school teacher training. See Appendix 5.

SECTION III: RESPONSE

School emergency response plans were developed by the building-level school safety team and include the following elements: policies and procedures for the safe evacuation of students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school in the event of a serious violent incident or other emergency which may occur before, during or after school hours, which includes evacuation routes and shelter sites and procedures for addressing medical needs, transportation and emergency notification to persons in parental relation to a student. Included in the Building Level Plan Detail is a list of the members of the emergency response team, other appropriate incident response teams, and a post-incident response team.

A. 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:
   o   School Intercom
   o   School Phone system
   o   Cell Phones of School Safety Team and staff
   o   Walkie-Talkies (supplied to School faculty and administration)
   o   Bull Horn
   o   School Messenger phone/email/text contacts
   o   Local media

Standard notification protocol will be for:
   o   Notification of an incident or hazard development to the Head of School as soon as possible following its detection.
   o   In the event of an emergency, the Head of School (Head of School Safety Team) will notify all building occupants to take appropriate protective action.

Also - upon the occurrence of violent incident, the Head of School will contact the appropriate local law enforcement officials and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. A list of local law enforcement officials and Diocesan personnel along with contact information will be maintained in the School "Emergency/Safety" Binder in the Main Office. The Head of School will also have a soft copy of this document on file, and a hard copy in his office.

In the event of disaster or violent act, as necessary, the Head of School will also notify the Diocesan Communications Counsel and the Board of Directors via phone, and 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.

As necessary, the School will notify parents of a violent incident or early dismissal through use of the School Messenger System: phone, text and email). Parent contact information will be maintained on Student Emergency Contact forms, and with a school-wide email group. The School Messenger System will also be maintained with current family/parent/guardian contact information.

Note that an updated School Staff contact list (with cell phone numbers) will be maintained by the Office Manager and placed within the School "Emergency/Safety" Binder. This binder will also contain: a list of all local emergency contact numbers (police, fire), 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). Next to that binder will be a 'Student Emergency Contact Binder' with Emergency Contact sheets for each student.

B. Assignment of Responsibilities
The chain of command at SAINT MARY SCHOOL in the case of emergencies is as follows:
1. Head of School
2. Principal
3. Director of Operations

C. Continuation of Operations
- In the event of an emergency, the Head of School or his/her designee will serve as Incident Commander. The School Incident Commander may be replaced by a member of the local emergency response team
- Upon relinquishing command, the Head of School 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.

D. Situational Responses
Plans are in place, with contact points in the appended, separate Building Level Response Plan document, for:
- Multi-Hazard Response
- Fire
- Intruder in the Building
- Medical Emergency
- Threat of Violence, including Suicide (by student, staff, visitor, other)
- Explosive/ Bomb Threat
- Hostage/ Kidnapping
- Civil Disturbance
- School Bus Accident
- Gas Leak
- Hazardous Material
- Biological Threat

Response to Acts of Violence
The below plan is in keeping with the School's Zero Tolerance Policy for School Violence. 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:
1. Injured parties will be taken care of
2. Offending individual will be contained
3. Head of School, in consultation with the Principal, will determine the level of threat
4. As necessary:
   a. The immediate area of the act will be isolated and/or evacuated
   b. Lockdown procedures will be activated
   c. Local law enforcement agencies will be notified
5. Situation will be monitored and response adjusted as necessary
6. As necessary:
   a. Initiate early dismissal
   b. Initiate shelter or evacuation procedures

Protective Action Options

Situation Plan

- **Shelter-In-Place (Lockout)** – In case of an emergency that is outside of the building:
- Principal makes announcement, no students are allowed to leave the building
- Excess staff will monitor all building entrances/exits, especially during class change
- Principal communicates with parents via School Messenger
- Students remain inside of the school building and follow directions of staff
- Teacher increases situational awareness
- Teacher conducts business as usual
- Teacher follows all announced directions
- No one will be permitted to enter or leave the building during a Shelter-In-Place

- **Lock-Down** – In case of an emergency or intruder that is inside of the building:
- Principal makes announcement on the PA system: **"We are going into lock-down"**
- Students remain silent and quickly move out of sight and away from the classroom door
- Teacher quickly retrieves any students in the hallway and locks the classroom door
- Teacher next to bathroom/locker room will retrieve any students from within and then lock classroom door
- Wait for emergency responders to open the door

- **School Cancellation**:
- Monitor situation that may warrant school cancellation (Head of School, Principal)
- Make cancellation determination
- Informs Superintendent of Catholic Schools
- Inform Families/Students
- Inform Staff
- Inform Board
- As necessary, inform other parties (e.g. **parish personnel**)

- **Early Dismissal**:
- Monitor situation that may warrant early dismissal (Head of School, Principal)
- Make early dismissal determination
- Agree on time to send early dismissal signal (intercom)
- Contact Transportation providers and make required arrangements
- Inform Families/Students
- Inform Staff
- Retain appropriate school personnel on site until all students have been returned home/picked up

- **Evacuation** (before, during and after school hours):
- Determine level of threat
- Make determination regarding movement to Sheltering Site
- Make determination regarding early dismissal
- Contact Transportation providers and provisionally make required arrangements
- Clear all evacuation routes and sites
- Evacuate staff and students to pre-arranged evacuation site
- Account for all students and staff populations. Report any missing persons to Head of School
- If dismissing early, contact families/transportation providers for pick up

- o Ensure adult/continued school supervision/security
- o Retain appropriate school personnel on site until all students have been returned home/picked up
- o **Movement to Sheltering Sites**:
- o Determine level of threat
- o Confirm sheltering location, depending on nature of incident
- o Evacuate staff and students to pre-arranged sheltering site
- o Account for all students and staff populations. Report any missing persons to Head of School
- o Make determination regarding early dismissal
- o If dismissing early, contact families/transportation providers for pick up
- o Ensure adult/continued school supervision/security
- o Retain appropriate school personnel on site until all students have been returned home/picked up

All of the above will be done in cooperation with local emergency responders.

For all Situations:
- o **Notify the Superintendent of Catholic Schools as soon as possible.**
- o **Contact the Diocesan Communications Counsel before informing any parents or the media.**
- o Parents - The Head of School will determine if and when parents need to be informed, and will do the informing. This will be done in consultation with the senior Administrative Team.
- o Media –The Head of School will determine if and when the media needs to be informed, and will do the informing. This will be done in consultation with the Diocesan Communications Counsel.
- o The School Safety 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: Principal asks for feedback from faculty and students (as appropriate), Head of School asks for feedback from other school constituencies (staff, security staff, etc.). The results of this Debrief will inform future plan updates.

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government
- o As necessary, the Head of School will request assistance from emergency services organizations and local government agencies. Contact numbers will be maintained in the School Emergency/ Safety Plan Binder. Soft and hard copies of this contact information will be maintained by the Head of School and Director of Operations in their offices.
- o A record will be maintained of all Local Government Emergency Assistance requests and responses.

Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials
- o As necessary, the Head of School will request advice and assistance from local government officials (county and city) and agencies such as the Red Cross. Contact names and numbers for all relevant local government officials and agencies, and the Red Cross will be maintained in the School Emergency/ Safety Plan Binder. Soft and hard copies of this contact information will be maintained by the Head of School and Director of Operations in their offices.
- o A record will be maintained of all Local Government Officials and Agencies requests and responses.

School Resources Available for Use in an Emergency
The following school resources are available in case of an emergency:
- - Cell Phone
- - Walkie Talkies
- - Tool Box

- First Aid and BCON Kits
- Flashlights

E. Security of Crime Scene
1. The Head of School (Head of School Safety Team) or designee is responsible for crime scene security and crime related evidence until relieved by law enforcement officials.
2. No item shall be removed, cleaned or altered without prior approval from the appropriate law enforcement agency.
3. Nothing in this section should be interpreted to preclude the rescue and aid of injured persons.

SECTION IV: RECOVERY

SAINT MARY SCHOOL Recovery (Post Incident Responses) will include, but not be limited to:
    Short term:
- Mental health counseling for staff and students (Catholic Charities)
- Building security
- Facility Restoration
- Post Incident Critique
  - After the recovery stage of any incident, the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team will conduct an internal debrief that will include re-evaluations of violence prevention and school safety activities as appropriate to improve our plan. Updates to the Safety Plan will be made as appropriate.

    Long Term:
- 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.

Note that the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team will coordinate with Catholic Charities mental health services and other available State and Federal services to ensure that the School has access to mental health resources in the event of a violent incident.

After the recovery stage of any incident, the SAINT MARY SCHOOL Safety Team will conduct an internal debrief that will include re-evaluations of violence prevention and school safety activities as appropriate to improve our plan. Updates to the Safety Plan will be made as appropriate.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: SCHOOL BUILDING COVERED BY THE SCHOOL *SAVE* PLAN

SAINT MARY SCHOOL
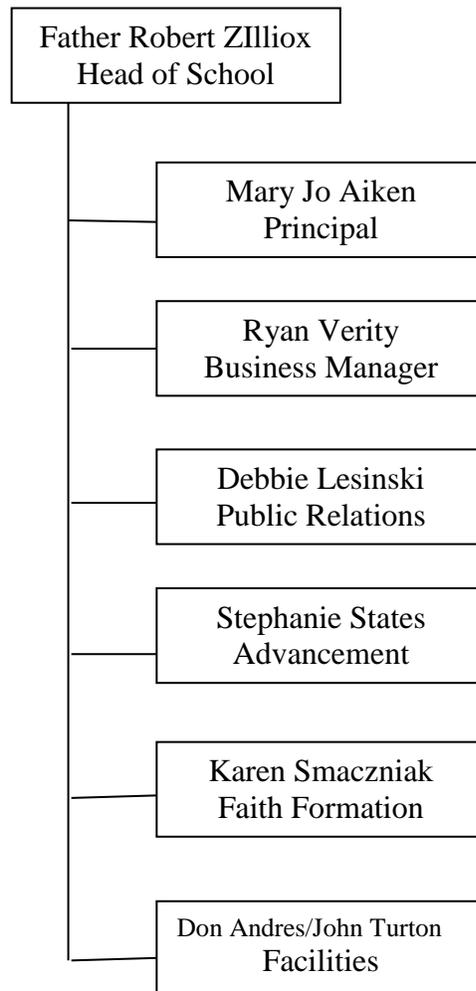6919 Transit Road, East Amherst, NY 14051
Mary Jo Aiken
Principal
716-689-8424
principal@stmaryschoolswormville.org

Appendix 2:   SCHOOL ORGANIZATION CHART
Identifying School Safety Core Team members and the School Safety Core Team Chain of Command

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Father Robert ZIlliox   │
│    Head of School       │
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     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     ├────────│    Mary Jo Aiken        │
     │        │      Principal          │
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     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     ├────────│     Ryan Verity         │
     │        │   Business Manager      │
     │        └─────────────────────────┘
     │
     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     ├────────│   Debbie Lesinski       │
     │        │   Public Relations      │
     │        └─────────────────────────┘
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     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     ├────────│  Stephanie States       │
     │        │    Advancement          │
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     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     ├────────│   Karen Smaczniak       │
     │        │   Faith Formation       │
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     │        ┌─────────────────────────┐
     └────────│ Don Andres/John Turton  │
              │      Facilities         │
              └─────────────────────────┘
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Appendix 3:   LOCAL EMERGENCY RESOURCES CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Resource   Phone #

Erie County Sheriff's Office……………… 716-858-2903 or ==911==

Swormville Fire Department……………... 716-688-7055 or ==911==

American Red Cross: Buffalo Chapter…..716-886-7500

Town of Clarence Emergency Services…. 716-741-8930

Hazardous Materials Response Team …...716-898-3696 or ==911==

NYSEG……………………………………… 1-800-572-1121 or ==911==

NATIONAL FUEL …………………………... 1-800-444-3130 or ==911==

Appendix 4: REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, Section 2801-a, Chapter 16, Title II, Article 55

Section 2801-a – Chapter 16, Title II, Article 55

§ 2801-a. School safety plans.

1. The board of education or trustees, as defined in section two of this chapter, of every school district within the state, however created, and every board of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension board and the chancellor of the city school district of the city of New York shall adopt and amend a comprehensive district-wide school safety plan and building-level school safety plans regarding crisis intervention, emergency response and management, provided that in the city school district of the city of New York, such plans shall be adopted by the chancellor of the city school district. Such plans shall be developed by district-wide school safety team and a building-level school safety team established pursuant to subdivision four of this section and shall be in a form developed by the commissioner in consultation with the division of criminal justice services, the superintendent of the state police and any other appropriate state agencies. A school district having only one school building, shall develop a single building-level school safety plan, which shall also fulfill all requirements for development of a district-wide plan.

2. Such comprehensive district-wide safety plan shall be developed by the district-wide school safety team and shall include at a minimum:
   - a. policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel as well as visitors to the school;
   - b. policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel as well as visitors to the school, including consideration of zero-tolerance policies for school violence;
   - c. appropriate prevention and intervention strategies such as:
     1. (i) collaborative arrangements with state and local law enforcement officials, designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained, including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and are effectively and fairly recruited;
     2. (ii) non-violent conflict resolution training programs;
     3. (iii) peer mediation programs and youth courts; and
     4. (iv) extended day and other school safety programs;
   - d. policies and procedures for contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident;
   - e. policies and procedures for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students of the district in the event of a violent incident;
   - f. policies and procedures relating to school building security, including where appropriate the use of school safety officers and/or security devices or procedures;
   - g. policies and procedures for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to the identification of family, community and environmental factors, to

teachers, administrators, school personnel, persons in parental relation to students of the district, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information;

- o h. policies and procedures for annual school safety training for staff and students;
- o i. protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage-takings, intrusions and kidnappings;
- o j. strategies for improving communication among students and between students and staff and reporting of potentially violent incidents, such as the establishment of youth-run programs, peer mediation, conflict
resolution, creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence and establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence; and
- o k. description of the duties of hall monitors and any other school safety personnel, the training required of all personnel acting in a school security capacity, and the hiring and screening process for all personnel acting in a school security capacity.

3. A school emergency response plan, developed by the building-level
school safety team defined in subdivision four of this section, shall include the following elements:

- o a. 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. For purposes of this subdivision, "serious violent incident" means an incident of violent
criminal conduct that is, or appears to be, life threatening and
warrants the evacuation of students and/or staff, as defined in
regulations of the commissioner developed in conjunction with the division of criminal justice services;
- o b. 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;
- o c. procedures for assuring that crisis response and law enforcement
officials have access to floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area;
- o d. establishment of internal and external communication systems in emergencies;
- o e. definition of the chain of command in a manner consistent with the national interagency incident management system/incident command system;
- o f. coordination of the school safety plan with the state-wide plan for disaster mental health services to assure that the school has access to federal, state and local mental health resources in the event of a violent incident;
- o g. procedures for review and the conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan; and
- o h. policies and procedures for securing and restricting access to the crime scene in order to preserve evidence in cases of violent crimes on school property.

4. Each district-wide school safety team shall be appointed by the board of education, or the chancellor in the case of the city school district of the city of New York, and shall include but not be limited to representatives of the school board, student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel, and other school personnel. Each building-

level school safety team shall be appointed by the building principal, in
accordance with regulations or guidelines prescribed by the board of education,
chancellor or other governing body. Such building-level 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.

5. Each safety plan shall be reviewed by the appropriate school safety team on at least an annual basis, and updated as needed.

6. Each board of education, chancellor or other governing body shall make each district-wide and building-level school safety plan available for public comment at least thirty days prior to its adoption, provided that only a summary of each building-level emergency response plan shall be made available for public comment. Such district-wide and building-level plans may be adopted by the school board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. Each district shall file a copy of its district-wide comprehensive safety plan with the commissioner and all amendments to such plan shall be filed with the commissioner no later than thirty days after their adoption. A copy of each building-level safety plan and any amendments thereto, shall be
filed with the appropriate local law enforcement agency 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 slaw or any other provision of law. If the board of education, chancellor or other governing
body or chancellor fails to file such plan as required by this section, the commissioner may, in an amount determined by the commissioner, withhold public money from the district until the district is in compliance.

7. The commissioner may grant a waiver of the requirements of this section to any
school district or board of cooperative educational services for a period of up to two years from the date of enactment
upon finding by the commissioner that such district had adopted comprehensive school safety plan on the effective date of this section
which is in substantial compliance with the requirements of this section.

8. The commissioner shall annually report to the governor and the legislature on the implementation and compliance with the provisions of this section.

9. Whenever it shall have been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the commissioner that a school district has failed to adopt a code of conduct which fully satisfies the requirements of section twenty-eight hundred one of this article, or a school safety plan which satisfies the requirements of this section, or to faithfully and completely implement
either or both, the commissioner may, on thirty days notice to the district, withhold from the district monies to be paid to such district for the current school year pursuant to section thirty-six hundred nine-a of this chapter, exclusive of monies to be paid in respect of obligations to the retirement systems for school and district staff and pursuant to collective bargaining agreements, or the commissioner may direct the district to expend up to such amount upon the development and implementation of a code of conduct and a school district safety plan as required by such sections. Prior to such withholding or redirection, the commissioner shall provide the district an opportunity to present evidence of extenuating circumstances; when combined with evidence that the district shall promptly comply within short time frames that shall be established by the commissioner as part of an
agreement between the district and the commissioner, the commissioner may temporarily stay the withholding or redirection of funds pending implementation of such
agreement. If the district promptly and fully complies with the
agreement and is in full compliance with this section and section twenty-eight hundred

one of this article, the commissioner shall abate the withholding in its entirety. Any failure to meet the obligations of the compliance agreement by the district within the time frames established shall be considered a willful violation of a commissioner's order by the members of the district board for purposes of subdivision one of section three hundred six of the education law. Notwithstanding any other law, rule or regulation, such transfer shall take effect upon filing of a notice thereof with the director of the budget and the chairs of the senate finance and assembly ways and means committees.

Last Updated: March 9, 2009

Appendix 5 – The Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors
A Guide for Teachers, Families and Communities

Early Warning Signs
It is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence. In some situations and for some youth, different combinations of events, behaviors, and emotions may lead to aggressive rage or violent behavior toward self or others. School personnel and students, as well as parents, are often in a good position to observe these early warning signs.

None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate--and potentially harmful--to use the early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children. Rather, the warning signs are offered only as an aid in identifying and referring children who may need help. A good rule of thumb is to assume that these warning signs, especially when they are presented in combination, indicate a need for further analysis to determine an appropriate intervention.

The information that follows and such other information as may be appropriate concerning Early Warning shall be made available to all employees in a form to be determined by the Superintendent. It is the policy of the Ramapo that employees and students use the early warning signs only for identification and referral purposes. Trained professionals should make diagnoses in consultation with the child's parents or guardian.

The following early warning signs are cited by the United States Department of Education in its publication entitled **Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools** and is presented with the following qualifications: They are not equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness. They include:

- Social Withdrawal – In some situations, gradual and eventually complete withdrawal from social contacts can be an important indicator of a troubled child. The withdrawal often stems from feelings of depression, rejection, persecution, unworthiness, and lack of confidence.

- Excessive Feelings of Isolation and Being Alone – Research has shown that the majority of children who are isolated and appear to be friendless are not violent. In fact, these feelings are sometimes characteristic of children and youth who may be troubled, withdrawn, or have internal issues that hinder development of social affiliations. However, research also has shown that in some cases feelings of isolation and not having friends are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.

- <u>Excessive Feelings of Rejection</u> – In the process of growing up, and in the course of adolescent development, many young people experience emotionally painful rejection. Children who are troubled often are isolated from their mentally healthy peers. Their responses to rejection will depend on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing their emotional distress in negative ways-including violence. Some aggressive children who are rejected by non-aggressive peers seek out aggressive friends who, in turn, reinforce their violent tendencies.
- <u>Being a Victim of Violence</u> – Children who are victims of violence-including physical or sexual abuse-in the community, at school, or at home are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.

- <u>Feelings of Being Picked On and Persecuted</u> – The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied, singled out for ridicule and humiliated at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support in addressing these feelings, some children may vent them in inappropriate ways-including possible aggression or violence.

- <u>Low School Interest and Poor Academic Performance</u> – Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to consider whether there is a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits the child's capacity to learn. In some situations such as when the low achiever feels frustrated, unworthy, chastised, and denigrated acting out and aggressive behaviors may occur. It is important to assess the emotional and cognitive reasons for the academic performance change to determine the true nature of the problem.

- <u>Expression of Violence in Writings and Drawings</u> – Children and youth often express their thoughts, feelings, desires, and intentions in their drawings and in stories, poetry, and other written expressive forms. Many children produce work about violent themes that for the most part is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence in writings and drawings that is directed at specific individuals (family members, peers, other adults) consistently over time, may signal emotional problems and the potential for violence. Because there is a real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, it is important to seek the guidance of a qualified professional such as a school psychologist, counselor, or other mental health specialist to determine its meaning.

- <u>Uncontrolled Anger</u> – Everyone gets angry; anger is a natural emotion. However, anger that is expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior toward self or others.

- <u>Patterns of Impulsive and Chronic Hitting, Intimidating and Bullying Behaviors</u> – Children often engage in acts of shoving and mild aggression; however, some mildly aggressive behaviors such as constant hitting and bullying of others which occur early in children's lives, if left unattended, might later escalate into more serious behaviors.

- <u>History of Discipline Problems</u> – Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems both in school and at home may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These unmet needs may be manifested in acting out and aggressive behaviors. These problems may set the stage for the child to violate norms and rules, defy authority, disengage from school, and engage in aggressive behaviors with other children and adults.

- <u>Past History of Violent and Aggressive Behavior</u> – Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Aggressive and violent acts may be directed toward other individuals, be expressed in cruelty to animals or include fire setting. Youths who show an early pattern of antisocial

behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk for future aggressive and antisocial behavior. Similarly, youth who engage in overt behaviors such as bullying, generalized aggression and defiance, and covert behaviors such as stealing, vandalism, lying, cheating and fire setting also are at risk for more serious aggressive behavior. Research suggests that age of onset may be a key factor in interpreting early warning signs. For example, children who engage in aggression and drug abuse at an early age (before age 12) are more likely to show violence later on than are children who begin such behavior at an older age. In the presence of such signs it is important to review the child's history with behavioral experts and seek parents' observations and insights.

- Intolerance for Differences and Prejudicial Attitudes – All children have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and physical appearance when coupled with other factors may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different. Membership in hate groups or the willingness to victimize individuals with disabilities or health problems also should be treated as early warning signs.

- Drug Use and Alcohol Use – Apart from being unhealthy behaviors, drug use and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes children and youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.

- Affiliation with Gangs **–** Gangs that support anti-social values and behaviors--including extortion, intimidation, and acts of violence toward other students cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are influenced by these groups those who emulate and copy their behavior, as well as those who become affiliated with them may adopt these values and act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations. Gang related violence and turf battles are common occurrences tied to the use of drugs that often result in injury and/or death.

- Inappropriate Access, Possession and Use of Firearms – Children and youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows that such youngsters also have a higher probability of becoming victims. Families can reduce inappropriate access and use by restricting, monitoring, and supervising children's access to firearms and other weapons. Children who have a history of aggression, impulsiveness, or other emotional problems should not have access to firearms and other weapons.

- Serious Threats of Violence – Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence. Recent incidents across the country clearly indicate that threats to commit violence against oneself or others should be taken very seriously. Steps must be taken to understand the nature of these threats and to prevent them from being carried out.

Identifying and Responding to Imminent Warning Signs
Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response.

No single warning sign can predict that a dangerous act will occur. Rather, imminent warning signs usually are presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors or threats directed at peers, employees, or other individuals. Usually, imminent warning signs are evident to more than one employee member--as well as to the child's family.

Imminent warning signs may include:
- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Severe destruction of property.
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of lethal violence.
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

Threat Assessment

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be written, spoken, or symbolic – as in motioning with one's hands as though shooting or strangling another person. There are principally four types of threats – direct, indirect, veiled and conditional.

Threats are made for a variety of reasons: as a warning signal, a reaction to fear of punishment, anxiety, demand for attention or as retribution for a perceived or actual slight or affront. Threats may be intended to taunt, intimidate, assert power, punish, manipulate, coerce, frighten, terrorize, compel desired behavior, to strike back for an injury, injustice or slight; to be disruptive, to challenge authority or to protect oneself.

Individuals who make threats normally manifest other behaviors or emotions that are indicative of a problem. These can include: signs of depression, prolonged brooding, evidence of frustration or disappointment; fantasies of destruction or revenge in conversations, writings, drawings or other actions; expressions of intense love, fear, rage, revenge, excitement or pronounced desire for recognition. Use of alcohol or drugs can be an aggravating factor, as can a romantic breakup, failing grades or conflicts with parents or friends.

Personality Traits

Personality traits and behaviors that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:
- A student intentionally or unintentionally revealing clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act;
- Low tolerance of frustration, easily hurt, insulted, angered by real or perceived injustices;
- Poor coping skills, demonstrating little ability to deal with frustration, criticism, disappointment, failure, rejection or humiliation;
- Lack of resiliency, is unable to bounce back from frustrating and disappointing experiences; failed love relationships, cannot accept or comes to term with humiliation or rejection;
- Injustice collector, nurses resentment over real or perceived injustices, will not forgive or forget those who s/he believes are responsible;
- Depression manifested by lethargy, physical fatigue, morose or dark outlook on life, malaise, lack of interest in activities once enjoyed, unpredictable anger, generalized or excessive hatred to others, hopelessness about the future, psychomotor agitation, restlessness, inattention, sleep and eating disorders;
- Narcissism, self-centered, lacking insight to the needs/feelings of others, blames others for failure and disappointment, may embrace the role of victim, displays signs of paranoia, self-importance or grandiosity, masking feelings of unworthiness, notably thick or thin skinned;
- Alienation, feels different or estranged from others, more than being a loner, involves feelings of isolation, sadness, loneliness, not belonging or fitting in;
- Dehumanizes others, fails to see others as humans, sees them as objects to be thwarted;
- Lacks empathy, demonstrates inability to understand feelings of others, may ridicule displays of emotion as weak or stupid;
- Exaggerated sense of entitlement, has a sense of being superior and constantly expects special treatment and consideration;

- Attitude of superiority, has a sense of being superior to others, smarter, more creative, talented, experienced, more worldly;
- Exaggerated/pathological need for attention, positive or negative, regardless of the circumstances;
- Externalizes blame, consistently refuses to take responsibility for own actions, blames others, often seems impervious to rational argument and common sense;
- Masks low self-esteem, may display arrogance, self-glorifying attitude, avoids high visibility or involvement, may be considered a "non-entity" by peers:
- Anger management problems, manifested by consistent temper tantrums, melodramatic displays, brooding, sulking, seething silence, reacts out of proportion to cause, may direct anger to those who have no connection to triggering incident;
- Intolerance, racial, ethnic, religious and other, displays symbols and slogans of intolerance on self or possessions;
- Inappropriate humor, macabre, insulting, belittling, or mean.
- Attempts to manipulate others, attempts to con and manipulate to win trust so others will rationalize aberrant behavior;
- Lack of trust, is untrusting and suspicious of the motives and intentions of others, may approach clinically paranoid state;
- Closed social group, introverted, with acquaintances rather than friends, may associate only with a single small group to the exclusion of others;
- Manifests a dramatic change in behavior, academic performance, disobedience of school rules, schedules, dress codes etc.
- Rigid and opinionated, judgmental and cynical, strong opinions on topics about which little knowledge is possessed, disregards facts, logic and reasoning;
- Demonstrates unusual interest in sensational violence;
- Fascination with violence-filled entertainment, movies, TV, computer games, music videos, printed material, inordinate amount of time with violent computer games and websites involving violence weapons and disturbing objects;
- Has negative role models, drawn to negative, inappropriate role models, Hitler, Satan or others associated with violence and destruction;
- Manifests behavior that is relevant to carrying out a threat, spends inordinate amount of time practicing with firearms, on violent websites, begins excluding normal pursuits such as homework, classwork, time with friends.

Family Dynamics
Family dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Turbulent parent/child relationship, relationship is particularly difficult, can be uniquely evident following recent or multiple moves, loss of parent, addition of step-parent, dismisses parents' role in his/her life, evidence of violence in the home;
- Acceptance of pathological behavior, parents do not react to behavior that most would find disturbing' parents appear unable to recognize or acknowledge problems in their children, respond quite defensively to real or perceived criticism of child, parents appear unconcerned about, minimize or reject reports of inappropriate behavior by child;
- Access to weapons, family keeps guns, weapons, explosives materials in the home and accessible to the children, weapons treated carelessly, without normal safety precautions, parent or role model may handle weapons irresponsibly or use as device for intimidation;
- Lack of family intimacy or closeness;
- Student "rules the roost," few limits set for children, parents regularly submit to child's demands, student insists on inordinate degree of privacy, parents have little information about student activities, school life, friends, or other relationships.
- No limits or monitoring of TV or Internet, parents do not supervise, limit or monitor TV, Internet, computer use or access.

School Dynamics
School dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Student attachment to school, student appears detached from school, other students, teachers, and school activities;
- Tolerance for disrespectful behavior, school does little to prevent or punish disrespectful behavior between students, bullying is part of the school culture, school authorities are oblivious to bullying, little or no intervention by school authorities, school atmosphere promotes racial or class divisions, allows them to remain unchallenged;
- Inequitable discipline, discipline is inequitably applied or is perceived as such by students or employees;
- Inflexible culture, official and unofficial patterns of behavior, values and relationships among students, teachers and administrators are static, unyielding and insensitive to changes in society and the changing needs of newer students;
- Pecking order among students, certain groups have more prestige and respect – both officially and unofficially by students and school officials;
- Code of silence, prevails among students, little trust between students and employees;
- Unsupervised computer access, access is unsupervised and unmonitored, students are able to play violent games, explore inappropriate websites, promote violent hate groups, give instruction in bomb making, etc.

Social Dynamics
Social dynamics that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- Media, entertainment and technology, easy, unmonitored access to media, entertainment and Internet sites with violent themes and images;
- Peer groups, intense and extensive involvement with a group that shares fascination with violence or extremist beliefs;
- Drugs and alcohol, knowledge of students' use of drugs or alcohol or changes in such use is important;
- Outside interests, outside interests of students are important to note as they can mitigate or increase the school's level of concern in assessing a threat;
- Copycat effect, school shooting and other violent incidents that receive intense media attention can generate threats or copycat violence elsewhere, school employees should be highly vigilant in the aftermath of such incidents.