

Menands Union Free School District District-Wide School Safety Plan

2024 - 2025

Revised: May 2024

Address: 19 Wards Lane, Menands, NY 12204

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Menands Union Free School District District-Wide School Safety Plan

Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 Project 14

INTRODUCTION

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. School Districts are required to develop a District-Wide School Safety Plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious, violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of schools with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies.

The District-Wide Plan is responsive to the needs of the Menands PreK-8 school within the District and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. Schools are at risk of a wide variety of acts of violence and natural and technological disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law.

This component of Project SAVE is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses risk reduction/prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in the District and its school.

Menands Union Free School District supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of Schools of Menands Union Free School District encourages and advocates on-going cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Purpose

The Menands Union Free School District District-Wide Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Menands Union Free School District Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools appointed a District-Wide School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the Emergency Response Plan.

B. Identification of School Teams

The Menands Union Free School District has appointed a District-Wide Emergency Response Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the school board, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel, transportation personnel and other school personnel.

C. Concept of Operations

- The Emergency Response Plan is directly linked to the individual Building-Level Emergency Response Plan as a matter of protocol. The activation of a Building-Level Emergency Response Plan triggers the notification of the chain of command and the assessment of the activation of the District-Wide School Safety Plan and District-Wide Response Team.
- The Emergency Response Plan was developed through extensive analysis of the local environment, emergency potential, and available resources. Through training and workshops that included school employees, administration and local emergency services, the plan has been developed to address the specific needs of the Menands Union Free School District and the community.

- In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the School Emergency Response Team. The Building Principal is responsible for notifying the Superintendent of Schools or the highest-ranking person in the chain of command of any necessary building-level plan activation. This notification shall be accomplished through the use of the telephone or other communication method.
- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or their designee, shall be notified and where appropriate, local emergency officials shall also be notified.
- Whenever the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan is activated and results in the closing of a school building within the District, the Superintendent of Schools or their designee shall notify the commissioner as soon as possible and shall provide such information as the commissioner may require in a manner prescribed by the commissioner. In addition, the District's Superintendent of Schools or their designee shall provide timely notification to the BOCES District Superintendent. In the situation of routine snow emergency days, such information will not be provided to the commissioner.
- County and state resources supplement the District's emergency action planning in a number of ways:
 - State and local law enforcement provide building reviews and employee training.
 - Local law enforcement and emergency services participate in planning and training exercises and develop strategies for managing Building-Level emergencies.
 - A protocol exists for the District to use certain facilities for sheltering during times of emergencies.
 - A protocol exists for the use of county mental health resources during post incident responses.

D. Plan Review and Public Comment

- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e)(3), this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The District's Board of Education shall adopt the Emergency Response Plan only after one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan shall be formally adopted by the Board of Education.
- Full copies of the Emergency Response Plan and any amendments shall be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption.
- This plan shall be reviewed periodically during the year and maintained by the District-Wide School Safety Team. The required annual review shall be completed each year after its adoption by the Board of Education.

RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Program Initiatives

The District has developed a number of programs and activities to aid in risk reduction. These initiatives are run at different age groups within the District. Examples of the topics covered:

- Collaborative agreements with state and local law enforcement officials designed to ensure that school safety and security personnel are adequately trained including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations.
- Non-violent conflict resolution training programs
- Youth-run programs overseen by school staff
- Creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence
- Community Resource Officer program who will be present at school during all days where school is in session.

Facilities Initiatives

The District has attempted to enhance the security of its facilities through a number of initiatives, including the following:

- The district has developed policies and procedures related to school building security, including, where appropriate: visitor sign-in and badge procedures, employee badges, security procedures (locked doors).

Training, Drills, and Exercises

Trauma Informed Drills

The district will perform emergency drills in a trauma informed manner. This means the district will avoid using tactics in training and drills that may introduce or activate trauma, such as the use of props, actors, simulations, or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting, incident of violence, or other emergency, or inclusion of developmentally or age-inappropriate content. These drills may inadvertently prompt a negative emotional or psychological response in staff or students because of previous exposure(s) to trauma.

Drill Procedures

The School District and board of cooperative educational services shall practice emergency response procedures under its District-Wide School Safety Plan and each of its Building-Level Emergency Response Plans (at least once every school year), where possible in cooperation with local law enforcement, emergency preparedness plan officials, and other first responders as follows:

- Evacuation and Lockdown drills shall be conducted with students at least twelve times in each school year, eight of which required drills shall be held between September first and December thirty-first of each such year. Eight of all such drills shall be evacuation drills, four of which shall be through use of the fire escapes on buildings where fire escapes are provided or through the use of identified secondary means of egress, such as through different corridors, hallways, stairways and exit doors. Four of all such required drills

shall be lock-down drills. The school district buildings may use temporary visual barriers to create a safe space during lockdown situations. Drills shall be conducted at different times of the school day. Students shall be instructed in the procedure to be followed in the event that a fire occurs during the lunch period or assembly, provided however, that such additional instruction may be waived where a drill is held during the regular school lunch period or assembly.

- At least two additional drills shall be held during summer school in buildings where summer school is conducted, and one of such drills shall be held during the first week of summer school.
- One Emergency Dismissal drill shall be conducted to test emergency response procedures that require early dismissal, at a time not to occur more than 15 minutes earlier than the normal dismissal time.
- Parents or persons in parental relation shall be notified at least one week prior to the drill.
- Such drills shall test the usefulness of the communications and transportation system during emergencies.
- The provisions of section 175.5(a) of this Title regarding the length of school day for State aid purposes shall not apply to school days in which less than the minimum number of hours is conducted because of an early dismissal pursuant to this subdivision.
- Drills conducted during the school day with students present shall be conducted in a trauma-informed, developmentally, and age-appropriate manner and shall not include props, actors, or simulations or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting or other act of violence or emergency. At the time that drills are conducted, students and staff shall be informed that the activities being conducted are a drill.
- The District may choose to conduct tabletop exercises as a training resource and may include a discussion-based activity for staff in an informal classroom or meeting type setting to discuss their roles during an emergency and their responses to a sample emergency situation.

If the district chooses to opt to participate in full-scale exercises in conjunction with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials that include props, actors, or simulations or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting or other act of violence or emergency, such exercises shall not be conducted on a regular school day or when school activities such as athletics are occurring on school grounds. Such exercises shall not include students without written consent from parents or persons in parental relation.

Drill Notification for Persons in Parental Relation

The School District shall be required to develop a schedule and process to notify parents, and persons in parental relation of scheduled drills which will include students. Building administrators are responsible for indicating in their Building-Level Emergency Response Plan the specific mechanism in which such persons will be informed and the timeframe in which this will occur prior to the drill being conducted. Drills held at the District or building level will be followed by a debriefing with participant stake holders to identify areas of success and opportunities for improvement. Building representatives will provide a report to the District-Wide Safety Team on drill status during regularly scheduled district-wide safety meetings.

Training

- The District has established policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for employees and students. Training includes:
 - An annual review of the building-level emergency response guides and general employee awareness training for building employees conducted by each principal or their designee.
 - The annual early go home drill to test evacuation and sheltering procedures.
 - Each school building conducts fire drills throughout the course of the year in compliance with the SED schedule for the purpose of familiarizing employees and students with emergency procedures.
- Topics for training will include general security and safety measures, intervention strategies with difficult or challenging students, building security awareness, violence prevention, mental health, and reporting requirements and procedures.

Assignment of Responsibilities

Faculty and Staff

In the execution of their duties, faculty, aides and monitors shall have responsibility for:

- Monitoring halls, lavatories, locker rooms, locker bays and similar areas, assuring orderly passage of students and pre-emptive intervention in potentially disruptive situations.
- 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.
- Overseeing study halls, cafeterias, or other areas of student assemblage with the goal of assisting to maintain an orderly, safe environment.

Chief Emergency Officer

The Chief Emergency Officer shall act as the liaison between the District and external agencies during times of emergency, as well as during plan development and maintenance. The Chief Emergency Officer is responsible for:

- coordination of the communication between school staff, law enforcement, and other first responders;
- leading the efforts of the district-wide school safety team in the completion and yearly update of the district-wide school safety plan and the coordination of the District-Wide School Safety Plan with the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans;
- ensuring staff understanding of the District-Wide School Safety Plan;
- ensuring the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans for each school building;
- assisting in the selection of security related technology and development of procedures for the use of such technology;
- coordinating appropriate safety, security, and emergency training for district and school staff, including required training in the emergency response plan;
- ensuring the conduct of required evacuation and lock-down drills in all district buildings as required by Education Law section 807;
- ensuring the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans by the dates designated by the commissioner.

School Safety Personnel

School safety personnel have a critical role in violence prevention. The following represents a description of the responsibilities of school safety personnel in schools.

The Building Principal or their designee shall serve as the School Safety Representative for the school building. The responsibilities of the School Safety Representative are as follows:

- Monitor hallways, entryways, exits and outside grounds during school hours for unusual occurrences or unauthorized visitors.
- Act as building liaison in communicating building-level safety issues or concerns.
 - Represent the building on the District-Wide Health and Safety Committee.
 - Serve on Building-Level School Building Response Team.
 - Attend school safety meetings and be a resource on school safety and security issues for building employees.
 - Develop plans and strategies for building security, crime and violence prevention, safety planning and employee training.
 - Participate in school incident investigations.
 - Respond to all school emergencies as part of the building's Emergency Response Plan.
 - Coordinate annual school safety multi-hazard training for students and employees. Multi-hazard training shall include crisis intervention, emergency response and management.
 - Employees and students shall receive annual training and drill practice on protocols for bomb threats, evacuation, sheltering, lockdown, relocate to hallway, fire emergency, bus drills and appropriate violence prevention strategies.
 - Designate procedure for informing substitute teaching and non-teaching employees of school safety protocols.
- Comply and encourage compliance with all school safety and security policies and procedures established by the Board of Education.
- Attend professional development activities on school safety and violence prevention.
- All school safety personnel shall be provided with training on violence prevention and school safety. All training courses shall receive prior approval from the Superintendent of Schools or their designee.

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 by schools, the District completes a fingerprinting and criminal background check prior to appointment. No employee works in the District until fingerprint clearance is received. Employees include: any person receiving compensation for work from schools; any employee of a contracted service provider involved in direct student contact; any worker assigned to a school under a public assistance employment program (includes part-time employees and substitutes).

Reference Checks

References are thoroughly checked prior to extending an employment offer.

- Reference check forms are used for instructional, non-instructional and transportation personnel.
- Reference checks are completed and reviewed by the administrative team along with the application.

- Prior to making a job offer to a prospective employee, the following mandatory questions are asked during reference checks with immediate and/or past supervisors:
 - Do you have knowledge of any violations of safety or security by (prospective employee) related to students, employees or others?
 - Why did (prospective employee) leave your employment? Or, do you know why (prospective employee) is leaving your employment?
 - Would you rehire (prospective employee)? If no, why not?

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The District has implemented policies and procedures related to the early detection of potentially violent behaviors. The Building Principal is responsible 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, including school bus drivers and monitors, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information. In addition, employees shall receive training on the District's Code-of-Conduct and awareness training on violent behaviors, to be conducted or coordinated by the Superintendent of Schools.

Behavioral Assessment Team

The Menands Union Free School District utilizes a multi-disciplinary safety (behavioral) assessment team at the building-level which assess whether certain exhibited behaviors or actions need intervention or other support. All district staff are trained annually on the purpose and procedures of these teams. These teams meet periodically throughout the school year to discuss behavioral intervention techniques, suicide ideation, and any other topics deemed necessary.

The membership of the Safety Assessment Team is multi-disciplinary and provides an array of opinions and perspectives when evaluating a student. While an initial assessment may occur with just a mental health professional and a school administrator, follow-up steps (if necessary) should include personnel who are specific to the student. For example, if a student is involved with sports, you could include a coach, or you may bring in teachers who are familiar with the student. Ideally, teams will include representatives who provide differing perspectives (e.g. mental health and administration) and professionals who are familiar with the at-risk student (e.g. teachers and coaches). An example team membership includes:

- Building administrators
- School-based mental health professional (Guidance counselor/school psychologist/school social worker)
- Teacher/coach (Who is familiar with the student)
- School resource officer
- Others who may know the student.

This team can expand or contract as necessary, but functions best when it has multiple perspectives and experiences.

C. Hazard Identification

The Building Level Emergency response plan identifies hazards of environmental, health, safety and security for the students and faculty of the school. The plan contains resources and mitigation measures to decrease risk and provide appropriate response.

RESPONSE

A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)

- In cases of a seriously violent incident, the District would use the procedure listed below to meet the requirements for notification and activation. A serious violent incident is an incident of violent criminal conduct that is, or appears to be, life threatening and warrants the evacuation of students and employees because of an imminent threat to their safety or health. This includes, but is not limited to, the use or threatened use of a firearm, explosive, bomb, incendiary device, chemical, or biological weapons, knives or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or serious injury, riots, hostage-taking, or kidnapping.
- Information will be provided to parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students when emergency drills are scheduled (except evacuation drills) through the use of telephone by employees at the building-level using the school district messaging system.

Communications systems are:

Internal

Teachers and building employees	Public address system, email, text message, other electronic communications
Students	Public address system, verbally from supervising teachers, other electronic communications
Superintendent of Schools	Phone, email, radio, verbal communication, text message, other electronic communications
Buildings and Grounds	Phone, radio, other electronic communications
Board of Education	Phone, E-mail, other electronic communications

External

New York State Police:	911 or 518-783-3211
Village P.D.	911 or 518-463-1681
Albany County Sheriff's Office	911 or 518-487-5400
Fire Department	911 or 518-463-9494
Parents	District Website: https://www.menands.org/ District Office – 518-465-4561 Parent Square Message System Menands Facebook Page Local Media/TV Stations

The Communications Specialist would be responsible for conveying emergency information to educational facilities within the district. The Communications Specialist would take appropriate steps to secure the following information about each educational agency within the District: Number of students, number of employees, transportation requirements associated with the evacuation of each facility and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each agency. Such information would be updated at least annually by the Communications Specialist. Each such agency

would report material changes to such data to the Communications Specialist, in writing, within seven days of such change.

Information will be provided to parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal through the use of telephone by employees at the building-level using the school district messaging system. These are the same stations that are used to announce official delays or closings. This information is provided to parents through the website and building handbooks. Additionally, if an event occurs at the campus where students cannot be released immediately, a parent/community public information center may be established at another location.

In the event that this public information center is established, parents and community members are encouraged not to report to the main campus where a building may be in crisis, but rather gather at a designated meeting place where regular public information statements will be made by the Communications Specialist or designee.

B. Situational Responses – Multi-Hazard Response and Response Protocols

Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

In the event of an act of violence or implied or direct threat, the district shall follow the following protocol:

- Follow the classroom emergency procedures as directed by the Building Principal.
- Use of employees trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Inform Building Principal and School Resource Officer of implied or direct threat.
- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee.
- Contact appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate, and include the possible use of the Emergency Response Team.

Acts of Violence

In the event of serious acts of violence, district personnel shall follow the following protocol:

- Follow the classroom emergency procedures as directed by the Building Principal and the procedures included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.
- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
- If necessary or threat is imminent, initiate lockdown procedures and contact appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Monitor situation; adjust response as appropriate; if necessary, initiate early dismissal, sheltering, or evacuation procedures.

Response Protocols

The Menands Union Free School District has a comprehensive multi-hazard Emergency Response Plan. Such plan is updated annually. The school district utilizes the New York SafeSchools Emergency Response Plans and the required “SHELL” Card. The school district provides annual training to all staff and faculty on the school district’s emergency response actions, includes this information in each classroom’s emergency folder, and discusses it regularly throughout the year during drills, full-scale exercises, tabletop exercises, and faculty meetings.

Chain of Command

Jennifer Cannavo	Superintendent of Schools
Kathleen Wylie	Building Principal
Joanne Moran	Business office
Audrey Koslowski	Coordinator of PPS

Follow-up of the violent incident should include:

1. Investigation of the incident by Building Principal and law enforcement, as necessary.
2. Preparation of written accounts of the incident by all involved.
3. Review of written accounts by the Building Principal for any disparities.
4. Appropriate disciplinary action according to the code of conduct.
5. Review of the entire incident by administration for future planning.
 - a. What happened?
 - b. Where did it happen?
 - c. When did it happen?
 - d. Why did it happen?
 - e. How did it happen?
 - f. How many individuals were involved?
 - g. Are the individuals associated with a group?
 - h. How could the incident have been prevented?
 - i. What warning signs were missed?
 - j. What can we do to prevent a future incident?
6. Counseling or other needed support for the victim(s), other students and staff involved in the incident.
7. Necessary reporting and parental notification.

Each school's Building-Level emergency response plan lists building specific response actions to criminal acts, bomb threats, civil disturbance, intrusion, hostage taking, kidnapping, as well as technological and natural disasters.

Response Protocols

The district has a comprehensive multi-hazard School Safety Plan. This plan is updated annually. Copies of the plan are available in each Principal's Office as well as in the Superintendent of Schools's Office. Elements of the plan include:

- Chain of Command and Incident Command Structure (ICS)
- Other Relevant Parties
- Emergency Planning Committee
- Emergency Telephone Numbers
- Telephone Tree
- CPR/AED List
- Fleet List
- A list of hazardous incidents and a response plan for each (e.g. bomb threat, hostage, intruder, natural disaster, structural failure, et. al.)

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

The administration shall use the following process in making arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency service organizations and local government agencies:

- Superintendent of Schools/Designee in an emergency contacts dispatch point or 911 center for fire or EMS response.
- Superintendent of Schools/Designee contacts highest-ranking local government official for notification and/or assistance.

Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials

The Administration shall use the following protocol for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials including the county or city officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law:

- Superintendent of Schools/Designee in an emergency will contact emergency management coordinator and/or the highest-ranking local government official for obtaining advice and assistance.
- The District has identified resources for an emergency from the following agencies: Red Cross, fire department, police, private industry, private individuals, religious organizations and others.

District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

The district has created a comprehensive list of resources available during an emergency, including fuel sources, communications, food service capability, maintenance vehicle lists, and medical supplies and AED, CPR and First Aid trained staff. Specific information in each of these categories is contained in the Building-Level plans.

Procedures to Coordinate the Use of School District Resources and Manpower during Emergencies

The District shall use the following procedure to coordinate the use of school resources and manpower during emergencies:

- The Building Principal of the affected facility shall contact the Superintendent of Schools or their designee and request the necessary manpower or resources.
- The Superintendent of Schools or the highest-ranking person in the chain of command shall assess the request and allocate personnel and resources as necessary.

Protective Action Options

The district shall follow the following protocols in assessing the appropriate protective action option. The decision to cancel school, to dismiss early, shelter in place, or evacuate shall be made in cooperation with state and local emergency responders, as appropriate.

- School Cancellation

- Monitor any situation that may warrant a school cancellation – Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
- Make determination – Superintendent of Schools.
- Contact local media – Superintendent of Schools or Communications Specialist.
- School Delay
 - Monitor any situation that may warrant school delay – Building Administrators/ Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, delay opening of school.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to coordinate transportation issues.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of delayed opening.
 - Set up information center so that parents may make inquiries as to situation.
 - Provide for safety and security of employees and students who do come to school.
- Early Dismissal
 - Monitor situation – Superintendent of Schools/Safety Team.
 - If conditions warrant, close school – Superintendent of Schools.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation.
 - Contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal.
 - Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation.
 - Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.
- Evacuation (before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes)
 - Determine the level of threat – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - Contact Transportation Supervisor to arrange transportation – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - Clear all evacuation routes and sites prior to evacuation.
 - Evacuate all employees and students to pre-arranged evacuation sites.
 - Account for all student and employee population. Report any missing employees or students to Building Principal.
 - Make determination regarding early dismissal – Superintendent of Schools or Designee.
 - If determination was made to dismiss early, contact local media to inform parents of early dismissal.
 - Ensure adult supervision or continued school supervision/security.
 - Set up an information center so that parents may make inquiries as to the situation.
 - Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.
- Sheltering Sites (internal and external)
 - Determine the level of threat – Superintendent of Schools/Incident Commander /Designee.
 - Determine location of sheltering depending on nature of incident.
 - Account for all students and employees. Report any missing employees or students to designee.
 - Determine other occupants in the building.
 - Make appropriate arrangements for human needs.
 - Take appropriate safety precautions.
 - Establish a Public Information Officer to provide information and current status of the situation to parents and other inquiring parties.

- Retain appropriate personnel until all students have been returned home.

Remote Instruction Plan

Menands Union Free School District has created a remote instruction plan and intends to enact the plan in the case of an emergency school closure where appropriate. Please find the districts remote instruction plan in appendix 5 of this document.

RECOVERY

Recovery addresses the help needed for all involved to heal and to restore the school community to “normal” operations. The District Plan supports the school building plan by deploying district resources that support the school’s building-level emergency response team and the post-incident response team.

Recovery plans include mental health/emotional recovery, academic, physical and business recovery, and can continue long after the actual emergency. The District has a school counselor and a school psychologist and support systems. The District has the ability to coordinate with school, local, Albany County and State disaster mental health services. The District’s role with mental health services includes looking at the school culture and climate, providing student access to services and following threat assessment procedures

A. Central Administration Support for Buildings

The Building-level Emergency Response Plans provide resources for supporting the building-level emergency response team and post-incident response team. The district’s Incident Command System (ICS) identifies back-ups to act in place of team members in cases of absences.

The district realizes that some emergencies may overwhelm an individual school’s ability to manage an extreme crisis. If/when the school is faced with an emergency such as threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the district-wide school safety team assists as follows:

- Acting as a sounding board regarding the implied or direct threats and/or violent acts.
- Assisting in determining the level of threat and appropriate response.
- Monitoring the situation and adjusting the district’s response as appropriate.
- Assisting with parent/guardian, faculty/staff, and media communication.
- Assisting with coordinating building and grounds security in conjunction with local and State Police.
- Offering debriefing sessions as needed working in conjunction with local, Albany County and/or State emergency responders.

B. Disaster Mental Health Services

If/when a building-level emergency response team or post-incident response team is faced with an emergency that may overwhelm the school’s ability to manage an extreme crisis, the district-wide school safety team assists as follows:

- Activating the district-wide post-incident response team. The district has a school psychologist, one school social worker, one counselor and one school nurse who have local connections to:
 - Neighboring school districts
 - Albany County Department of Mental Health

- Offering district support and looking for continued feedback from those directly impacted during the incident, with projected plans to assist if needed during heightened stressful times such as a re-occurrence of a similar event and anniversaries of the original event.
- Assisting with parent/guardian, student, and faculty/staff debriefing and/or post-incident crisis intervention. The debriefing is also used in part to evaluate the district's plan for possible revisions. If needed, assisting in contacting additional outside mental health resources such as the National Organization for Victim Assistance (1-800-try-nova; www.try-nova.org).
- Assisting the schools with written statements going out to faculty/staff, parents/guardians, press releases and media requests through the district's Public Information Officer.

Appendix 1 - Listing of all District Buildings

Menands Union Free School District serves a student population of approximately 300. Within the district there are approximately 60 employees, who serve a variety of functions in the development and education of the entire district's student body.

Menands Union Free School District Building Names and Locations

Menands School K-8

19 Wards Lane, Menands, NY 12204
518-465-4561 x 119
Jennifer Cannavo, Superintendent of Schools

<https://www.menands.org/>

School Website

Appendix 2 – Building-Level Emergency Response Plan Summary

Menands Union Free School District Building-Level Emergency Response Plan Summary

Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17

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.

The Menands Union Free School District supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of Schools of Schools encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The Menands Union Free School District Building-Level Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Menands Union Free School District Board of Education, the administration of the Menands Union Free School District schools appointed a Building-Level Emergency Response Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the School Emergency Response Plan.

B. Identification of School Teams

Each building has developed two emergency teams:

- Building-Level Emergency Response Team
- Building-Level Post-incident Response Team

C. Concept of Operations

- The initial response to all emergencies will be by the School Emergency Response Team.
- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or their designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified.
- Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols.

D. Plan Review and Public Comment

- The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by members of the Building-Level Emergency Response Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before September 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education.
- Pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17 (e)(3), a summary of the District-Wide School Safety Plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The School Board may adopt the district-wide plans only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plans must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.
- Building-Level Emergency Response Plans shall be 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 and submitted into the online portal on no later than October 1st of each year.

PLAN SUMMARY

RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A. Designation of School Teams

- A Building-Level Emergency Response Team, including the members required by regulation, has been created. Members of the team include school safety personnel; local law enforcement officials; representatives of teacher, administrator, and parent organizations; Bus Drivers, and Monitors; local ambulance and other emergency response agencies; community members; other school personnel; and other representatives appointed by the Board of Education.
- A Building-Level Post-Emergency Response Team, including the members required by regulation, has been created. Members of the team include: school personnel; medical personnel; mental health counselors; and others who can assist the school community in coping with the aftermath of a serious violent incident or emergency.

B. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

- Training for emergency teams and individuals who have safety responsibility, including de-escalation training, has been conducted as determined in the district-wide plan.
- Procedures for an annual review and the conduct of drills and exercises to test components of this school’s plan, including the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials have been developed and will be implemented.
- The District-Wide School Safety Plan requires annual multi-hazard training for students and staff. The school’s plan describes how this training will be provided to staff and students in the building.

C. Identification of Sites of Potential Emergencies

The District-Wide School Safety Plan requires an identification of sites of potential emergency. The Building-Level Emergency Response Team has identified both internal and external hazards that may warrant protective actions, such as the evacuation and sheltering of the school population.

RESPONSE

A. Assignment of Responsibilities

A chain of command consistent with the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) will be used in response to an emergency in the building. In the event of an emergency, the building's response team may adapt NIIMS/ICS principles based on the needs of the incident.

B. Continuity of Operations

The building has developed procedures to continue operations during an emergency.

C. Access to Floor Plans

Procedures have been developed to ensure that crisis response, fire and law enforcement agencies have access to floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school's interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area.

D. Notification and Activation

Procedures have been developed to ensure that crisis response, fire and law enforcement agencies have access to floor plans, blueprints, schematics or other maps of the school's interior, school grounds and road maps of the immediate surrounding area.

Internal and external communication systems have been developed that will be used in emergencies.

Procedures are in place for notification and activation of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

E. Hazard Guidelines

The District-Wide School Safety Plan includes multi-hazard response plans for taking actions in response to an emergency. The school building's plan may include building-specific guidelines for the following types of emergencies: Threats of Violence, Intruder, Hostage/Kidnapping, Explosive/Bomb Threat, Natural/Weather Related, Hazardous Material, Civil Disturbance, Biological, School Bus Accident, Radiological, Gas Leak, Epidemic, or Others as determined by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team.

F. Evacuation Procedures

Policies and procedures have been developed for the safe evacuation of students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school in the event of a serious violent incident which include at least the following:

- Evacuation before, during and after school hours (including security during evacuation)
- Evacuation routes (internal & external)
- Sheltering sites (internal & external)
- Procedures for addressing medical needs
- Transportation
- Emergency notification of persons in parental relation to the students
- Other procedures as determined by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team.

G. Security of Crime Scene

Policies and procedures have been established for securing and restricting access to the crime scene in order to preserve evidence from being disturbed or destroyed in cases of violent crimes on school property.

RECOVERY

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be coordinated with the statewide 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.

Short-term actions for recovery include:

- Mental health counseling (students and staff)
- Building security
- Facility restoration
- Post-incident response critique
- Other

Long-term actions for recovery include:

- Mental health counseling (monitor for post-traumatic stress behavior)
- Building security
- Mitigation (to reduce the likelihood of occurrence and impact if it does occur again)
- Other

Appendix 3 - Enhancing School Safety Using A Threat Assessment Model An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence

This guide was prepared by the staff of the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) (2018)

INTRODUCTION

When incidents of school violence occur, they leave a profound and lasting impact on the school, the community, and our nation as a whole. Ensuring safe environments for elementary and secondary school students, educators, administrators, and others is essential. This operational guide was developed to provide fundamental direction on how to prevent incidents of targeted school violence, that is, when a student specifically selects a school or a member of the school community for harm. The content in this guide is based on information developed by the U.S. Secret Service, Protective Intelligence and Assessment Division, National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)

When establishing threat assessment capabilities within K-12 schools, keep in mind that there is no profile of a student attacker. There have been male and female attackers, high-achieving students with good grades as well as poor performers. These acts of violence were committed by students who were loners and socially isolated, and those who were well-liked and popular. Rather than focusing solely on a student's personality traits or school performance, we can learn much more about a student's risk for violence by working through the threat assessment process, which is designed to gather the most relevant information about the student's communications and behaviors, the negative or stressful events the student has experienced, and the resources the student possesses to overcome those setbacks and challenges.

CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TARGETED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN

Ensuring the safety of our schools involves multiple components, including physical security, emergency management, and violence prevention efforts in the form of a threat assessment process. This process begins with establishing a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan. The plan includes forming a multidisciplinary threat assessment team, establishing central reporting mechanisms, identifying behaviors of concern, defining the threshold for law enforcement intervention, identifying risk management strategies, promoting safe school climates, and providing training to stakeholders. It can also help schools mitigate threats from a variety of individuals, including students, employees, or parents. This guide provides basic instructions for schools on creating a targeted violence prevention plan, the focus of which is to decrease the risk of students engaging in harm to themselves or the school community. These recommendations serve as the starting point on a path to implementation that will need to be customized to the specific needs of your school, your student body, and your community. When creating these plans, schools should consult with legal representatives to ensure that they comply with any applicable state and federal laws or regulations.

STEP 1. ESTABLISH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The first step in developing a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan is to establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team (hereafter referred to as the "Team") of individuals who will direct, manage, and document the threat assessment process. The Team will receive reports about concerning students and situations, gather additional information, assess the risk posed to the school community, and develop intervention and management strategies to mitigate any risk of harm. Some considerations for establishing a Team include:

Some schools may pool their resources and have a single Team that serves an entire district or county, while other districts may choose to have a separate Team for each school.

Teams should include personnel from a **variety of disciplines** within the school community, including teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, school resource officers, mental health professionals, and school administrators. The multidisciplinary nature of the Team ensures that varying points of view will be represented and that access to information and resources will be broad.

The Team needs to have a **specifically designated leader**. This position is usually occupied by a senior administrator within the school.

Teams should establish **protocols and procedures** that are followed for each assessment, including who will interview the student of concern; who will talk to classmates, teachers, or parents; and who will be responsible for documenting the Team's efforts. Established protocols allow for a smoother assessment process as Team members will be aware of their own roles and responsibilities, as well as those of their colleagues.

Team members should meet whenever a concerning student or situation has been brought to their attention, but they should also **meet on a regular basis** to engage in discussions, role-playing scenarios, and other teambuilding and learning activities. This will provide members of the Team with opportunities to work together and learn their individual responsibilities so that when a crisis does arise, the Team will be able to operate more easily as a cohesive unit.

STEP 2. DEFINE PROHIBITED AND CONCERNING BEHAVIORS

Schools need to establish policies defining prohibited behaviors that are unacceptable and therefore warrant immediate intervention. These include threatening or engaging in violence, bringing a weapon to school, bullying or harassing others, and other concerning or criminal behaviors. Keep in mind that **concerning behaviors occur along a continuum**. School policies should also identify behaviors that may not necessarily be indicative of violence, but also warrant some type of intervention. These include a marked decline in performance; increased absenteeism; withdrawal or isolation; sudden or dramatic changes in behavior or appearance; drug or alcohol use; and erratic, depressive, and other emotional or mental health symptoms.

If these behaviors are observed or reported to the Team, schools can offer resources and supports in the form of mentoring and counseling, mental health care, tutoring, or social and family services.

The threshold for intervention should be relatively low so that Teams can identify students in distress before their behavior escalates to the point that classmates, teachers, or parents are concerned about their safety or the safety of others. It is much easier to intervene when the concern is related to a student's struggle to overcome personal setbacks, such as a romantic breakup, than when there are concerns about threats posed to others.

During the assessment process, Teams may identify other **concerning statements and actions** made by the student that may not already be addressed in their policies. Gathering information about these behaviors will help the Team assess whether the student is at risk for attacking the school or its students and identify strategies to mitigate that risk.

STEP 3. CREATE A CENTRAL REPORTING MECHANISM

Students may elicit concern from those around them in a variety of ways. They may make threatening or concerning statements in person, online, or in text messages; they may engage in observable risky behavior; or they may turn in assignments with statements or content that is

unusual or bizarre. When this occurs, those around the student need a method of reporting their concerns to the Team.

Schools can **establish one or more reporting mechanisms**, such as an online form posted on the school website, a dedicated email address or phone number, smart phone application platforms, or another mechanism that is accessible for a particular school community.

Students, teachers, staff, school resource officers, and parents **should be provided training and guidance on recognizing behaviors of concern, their roles and responsibilities in reporting the behavior, and how to report the information.**

Teams need to be sure that a team member proactively monitors all incoming reports and can **respond immediately** when someone's safety is concerned.

Regardless of what method schools choose to receive these reports, there should be an **option for passing information anonymously**, as students are more likely to report concerning or threatening information when they can do so without fear of retribution for coming forward.

The school community should feel confident that team members will be responsive to their concerns, and that **reports will be acted upon, kept confidential, and handled appropriately.**

STEP 4. DETERMINE THE THRESHOLD FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTION

The vast majority of incidents or concerns that are likely to be reported can be handled by school personnel using school or community resources. For example, the most common types of reports submitted to Safe2Tell Colorado during the 2016- 2017 school year were related to suicide, bullying, drugs, cutting (self-harm), and depression.² Some of these common reports may not require the involvement of law enforcement. Those that do warrant law enforcement intervention include threats of violence and planned school attacks, which constituted Safe2Tell's sixth and seventh most common types of reports, respectively.

Reports regarding student **behaviors involving weapons, threats of violence, physical violence, or concerns about an individual's safety** should immediately be reported to local law enforcement. This is one reason **why including a school resource officer or local law enforcement officer** on the Team is beneficial.

If a school resource officer is not available to serve on the Team, schools should set a clear threshold for times and situations **when law enforcement will be asked to support or take over an assessment.** For example, it might be necessary to have law enforcement speak with a student's parent or guardian, search a student's person or possessions, or collect additional information about the student or situation outside the school community during the assessment.

STEP 5. ESTABLISH ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Teams need to establish clearly defined processes and procedures to guide their assessments. Note that any safety concerns should be immediately addressed before the procedures described below take place. When followed, the procedures should allow the Team to form an accurate picture of the student's thinking, behavior, and circumstances to inform the Team's assessment and identify appropriate interventions.

Maintain documentation to keep track of when reports come in; the information that is gathered; when, where, and how it was obtained; who was interviewed; the behaviors and circumstances of

the student of concern; and the intervention strategies taken. Documentation requirements, such as forms and templates, should be included in the plan to ensure standardization across cases.

Use a community systems approach. An effective approach for gathering information to assess a student of concern is **to identify the sources that may have information on the student's actions and circumstances.** This involves identifying the persons with whom the student has a relationship or frequently interacts and the organizations or platforms that may be familiar with the student's behaviors. Students exist in more than one system and they come in contact with people beyond their classmates and teachers at school. Gathering information from multiple sources ensures that Teams are identifying concerning behaviors, accurately assessing the student's risks and needs, and providing the appropriate interventions, supports, and resources.

Examine online social media pages, conduct interviews, review class assignments, and consider searching the student's locker or desk. Team members should also review **academic, disciplinary, law enforcement, and other formal records** that may be related to the student. When reviewing school records, be sure to determine whether the student has been the subject of previous reports to school officials, especially if the student has a history of engaging in other concerning or threatening behaviors. Also determine if the student received any intervention or supports and whether those were beneficial or successful. The Team may be able to draw on information from previous incidents and interventions to address the current situation for the student. This factor further emphasizes the importance of the Team's documentation to ensure the accuracy and availability of information regarding prior contacts the student of concern may have had with the Team.

Build rapport that can facilitate information-gathering efforts. By demonstrating that their goal is to support individuals who may be struggling, while ensuring that the student and the school are safe, Teams may be better able to build a positive relationship with a student of concern and the student's parents or guardians. When Teams have established this rapport, parents or guardians may be more likely to share their own concerns, and the student may be more forthcoming about frustrations, needs, goals, or plans.

Evaluate the student's concerning behaviors and communications in the context of their age and social and emotional development. Some students' behaviors might seem unusual or maladaptive, but may be normal for adolescent behavior or in the context of a mental or developmental disorder. To ensure that these students are being accurately assessed, collect information from diverse sources, including the reporting party, the student of concern, classmates, teammates, teachers, and friends. Consider whether those outside of their immediate circle, such as neighbors or community groups, may be in a position to share information regarding observed behaviors.

Investigative themes

Teams should organize their information gathering around several themes or areas pertaining to the student's actions, circumstances, and any other relevant threat assessment factors. Addressing each theme is necessary for a complete assessment and may uncover other avenues of inquiry to help determine whether the student is at risk for engaging in violence. Using the themes to identify where the student might be struggling will help the Team identify the most appropriate resources. Keep in mind, there is no need to wait until the Team has completed all interviews or addressed every theme before taking action. As soon as an area for intervention is identified, suitable management strategies should be enacted.

Motives

Students may have a variety of motives that place them at risk for engaging in harmful behavior, whether to themselves or others. If you can discover the student's motivation for engaging in the concerning behavior that brought him/her to the attention of the Team, then you can understand more about the student's goals. The Team should also assess how far the student may be willing to go to achieve these goals, and what or who may be a potential target. Understanding motive further allows the Team to develop management strategies that can direct the student away from violent choices.

Communications

Look for concerning, unusual, bizarre, threatening, or violent communications the student made. The student's communications may reveal grievances held about certain issues or a possible intended target. They may allude to violent intentions or warn others to stay away from school at a certain time. They may reveal information relevant to the other investigative themes by making reference to feelings of hopelessness or suicide, a fascination with violence, interest in weapons, or other inappropriate interests. These statements might be made in person to classmates, teammates, or friends; in writing on assignments or tests; and/or via social media, text messages, or photo or video-sharing sites. Earlier NTAC research that examined attacks on schools found that not every student directly threatened their target prior to attack, but in a majority of incidents (81%), another person was aware of what the student was thinking or planning. It is important for Teams to remember that a student who has not made threatening statements may still be at risk for engaging in violence. Whether or not the student made a direct threat should not be the lone indicator of concern.

Inappropriate interests

Gather information about whether the student has shown **an inappropriate or heightened interest in concerning topics such as school attacks or attackers, mass attacks, or other types of violence**. These interests might appear in the student's communications, the books the student reads, the movies the student watches, or the activities the student enjoys. The context of the student's interests is an important factor to consider. For example, a student's interest in weapons may not be concerning if the student is a hunter or is on the school's rifle team, with no evidence of an inappropriate or unhealthy fixation on weapons. In other situations, the context surrounding a student's interest in weapons could be of concern. For example, if a student is fixated on past school shooters or discusses what firearm would be best to use in a mass attack.

Weapons access

In addition to determining whether the student has any inappropriate interests or fascination with weapons, the Team should assess whether the student **has access to weapons**. Because many school attackers used firearms acquired from their homes, consider whether the family keeps weapons at home or if there is a relative or friend who has weapons. Sometimes parents who keep weapons at home incorrectly assume that their children are unaware of where they are stored or how to access them. If there are weapons at home, the Team should determine if they are stored appropriately and if the student knows how to use them or has done so in the past. The Team should also remember that firearms are not the only weapons to be concerned about. Even though many school attackers have used firearms in carrying out their attacks, explosives, incendiary devices, bladed weapons, or combinations of these weapons have been used in past attacks.

Stressors

All students face stressors such as **setbacks, losses, and other challenges** as part of their lives. While many students are resilient and can overcome these situations, for some, these stressors may

become overwhelming and ultimately influence their decision to carry out an attack at school. Gather information on stressors the student is experiencing, how the student is coping with them, and whether there are supportive friends or family who can help the student overcome them. Assess whether the student experienced stressors in the past that are still having an effect, such as a move to a new school, and whether there might be additional setbacks or losses in the near future, like a relationship that might be ending. **Stressors can occur in all areas of a student's life**, including at school with coursework, friendships, romantic relationships, or teammates, or outside of school with parents, siblings, or at jobs. Many students can experience bullying, a stressor which can take place in person at school or online at home. Teams should intervene and prevent bullying and cyberbullying of a student who has been brought to their attention. More broadly, administrators should work to address any concerns regarding bullying school-wide and ensure their school has a safe climate for all students.

Emotional and developmental issues

Anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide, and other mental health issues are important factors to consider when conducting an assessment. Keep in mind that students with emotional issues or developmental disorders might behave in a way that is maladaptive but might not be concerning or threatening because the behavior is a product of their diagnosis. **Behaviors exhibited by a student with a diagnosed disorder need to be evaluated in the context of that diagnosis and the student's known baseline of behavior.** If the student is experiencing feelings related to a diagnosable mental illness, such as depression, then the Team needs to consider the effect of these feelings on their behaviors when assessing the student's risk of engaging in harm to self or others.

Desperation or despair

Assess whether the student feels **hopeless, desperate, or out of options.** Determine if the student has had thoughts about or engaged in behaviors that would indicate the student's desperation. The Team should determine whether the student has felt this way before, how the student managed those feelings then, and whether those same resources for coping are available to the student now. Consider whether the student has tried addressing the problems in a positive way, but was unable to resolve them, thereby leading to a sense of hopelessness about their situation.

Violence as an option

Some students, who are feeling hopeless and out of options, **may think violence is the only way to solve a problem or settle a grievance.** The Team should look to see whether the student thinks violence is acceptable or necessary, if the student has used violence in the past to address problems, and whether the student has thought of alternative ways to address the grievances. The Team should also assess whether peers, or others, support and encourage the student to use violence as a means to an end. If possible, connect the student with more positive, prosocial role models who discourage violence and identify more acceptable ways to solve problems.

Concerned others

In previous incidents, many students made statements or engaged in behaviors prior to their attacks that elicited concern from others in their lives. Assess whether parents, friends, classmates, teachers, or others who know the student are worried about the student and whether they have taken any actions in response to their concerns. Gather information on the specific behaviors that caused worry or fear. These could **include behaviors that may have elicited concerns about the safety of the student or others**, such as unusual, bizarre or threatening statements; intimidating or aggressive acts; indications of planning for an attack; suicidal ideations or gestures; or a fixation on a specific target. **Other behaviors that elicit concern may not necessarily be indicative of violence**, but do require that the Team assess the behavior and provide appropriate supports.

Examples of these behaviors include alcohol or drug use; behavior changes related to academic performance, social habits, mood, or physical appearance; conflicts with others; and withdrawal or isolation.

Capacity to carry out an attack

Determine whether the student's thinking and behavior is organized enough to plan and execute an attack and whether the student has the resources to carry it out. **Planning does not need to be elaborate** and could be as simple as taking a weapon from home and inflicting harm on classmates at school. Other student attackers may develop more complex and lengthier plans. At the very least, carrying out an attack requires that the student has access to a weapon and the ability to get that weapon to school undetected.

Planning

Targeted attacks at school are **rarely sudden or impulsive** acts of violence. The Team should assess whether the student has made specific plans to harm the school. The student might create lists of individuals or groups targeted for violence, or research tactics and materials needed to carry out the attack. The student may conduct surveillance, draw maps of the planned location, and test security responses at school. He/she may write out detailed steps and rehearse some aspects of a plan, such as getting to the school, the timing of the attack, or whether to attempt escape, be captured, or commit suicide. The student may also acquire, manufacture, or practice with a weapon.

Consistency

The Team should **corroborate the student's statements** to determine that they are consistent with the student's actions and behaviors and with what other people say about the student. When inconsistencies are identified, the Team should then try to determine why that is the case. For example, the student might say that he/she is handling a romantic break-up well, but posts on social media indicate the student is struggling to move on, and friends report that the student is more upset or angry about the break-up than reported. Determine whether the inconsistency is because the student is deliberately hiding something or if the inconsistency stems from another underlying issue. For example, a depressed student may claim that they are isolated, even if they regularly go out with a large group of students. If the inconsistency is deliberate, it is important to determine why the student feels the need to conceal their actions. The concealment may be as simple as a fear of facing punishment for some other inappropriate behavior, or it may be related to hidden plans for a violent act.

Protective factors

A thorough threat assessment requires understanding the full picture of a student's behaviors and environment, which also includes accounting for the positive and prosocial influences on the student's life. The Team should identify factors that may restore hope to a student who feels defeated, desperate, or in a situation that is impossible to overcome. This includes determining whether the student has a **positive, trusting relationship with an adult at school**. This could be a teacher, coach, guidance counselor, administrator, nurse, resource officer, or janitor. A trusted adult at school in whom the student can confide and who will listen without judgment can help direct a student toward resources, supports, and options to overcome setbacks. Learn who the student's friends are at school and if the student feels emotionally connected to other students. A student may need help developing friendships that they can rely on for support. Positive situational or personal factors might help to deter a student from engaging in negative or harmful behaviors. Changes in a student's life, such as having a new romantic relationship or becoming a member of a team or club, might discourage any plan to engage in violence. The Team could also use activities or groups the student wants to take part in as motivation for the student to engage in positive and

constructive behaviors, such as attending class, completing assignments, and adhering to a conduct or behavior code.

STEP 6. DEVELOP RISK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Once the Team has completed a thorough assessment of the student, it can **evaluate whether the student is at risk for self-harm or harming someone else** at school. Concern may be heightened if the student is struggling emotionally, having trouble overcoming setbacks or losses, feeling hopeless, preoccupied with others who engaged in violence to solve problems, or has access to weapons. Remember, the Team is not attempting to predict with certainty if violence will happen. Instead, evaluate the presence of factors that indicate violence might be a possibility. Teams can then **develop risk management strategies that reduce the student's risk for engaging in violence** and make positive outcomes for the student more likely.

Each student who comes to the Team's attention will require an **individualized management plan**. The resources and supports the student needs will differ depending on the information gathered during the assessment.

Often, the Team will determine that the student is not currently at risk for engaging in violence, but **requires monitoring or is in need of guidance** to cope with losses, develop resiliency to overcome setbacks, or learn more appropriate strategies to manage emotions.

Resources to assist the student could take the form of peer support programs or therapeutic counseling to enhance social learning or emotional competency, life skills classes, tutoring in specific academic subjects, or mental health care. Most programs and supports will be available within the school, but the Team may need to also access community resources to assist with managing the student.

Sometimes management involves suspension or expulsion from school. When this is necessary, Teams and school administrators should consider how it might affect their ability to monitor the student. **Removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk to the school community**. Several school attacks have been carried out by former students who had been removed from the school or aged out of their former school. A suspended or expelled student might become isolated from positive peer interactions or supportive adult relationships at school. Teams should develop strategies to stay connected to the suspended or expelled student to determine whether the student's situation is deteriorating, or the behaviors of concern are escalating so that they can respond appropriately. Management plans should remain in place until the Team is no longer concerned about the student or the risk for violence. This is accomplished by addressing the following basic elements that can reduce the likelihood a student will engage in violence and provide support and resources for those in need.

Notify law enforcement immediately if a student is thinking about or planning to engage in violence, so that they may assist in managing the situation.

Make efforts to address the safety of any potential targets by altering or improving security procedures for schools or individuals and providing guidance on how to avoid the student of concern.

Create a situation that is less prone to violence by asking the family or law enforcement to block the student's access to weapons, while also connecting the student to positive, prosocial models of

behavior. Another option may involve removing the student from campus for a period of time, while maintaining a relationship with the student and the student's family.

Remove or redirect the student's motive. Every student's motive will be different, and motives can be redirected in a variety of ways. These strategies may include bullying prevention efforts or offering counseling for a student experiencing a personal setback.

Reduce the effect of stressors by providing resources and supports that help the student manage and overcome negative events, setbacks, and challenges.

STEP 7. CREATE AND PROMOTE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATES

A crucial component of preventing targeted violence at schools relies on developing positive school climates **built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and social and emotional support.**

Teachers and staff in safe school environments support diversity, encourage communication between faculty and students, intervene in conflicts, and work to prevent teasing and bullying. Students in safe school climates feel empowered to **share concerns with adults**, without feeling ashamed or facing the stigma of being labeled a "snitch." Administrators can take action to develop and sustain safe school climates.

Help students feel connected to the school, their classmates, and teachers. This is an important first step to creating school climates that are supportive, respectful, and safe. **Encourage teachers and staff to build positive, trusting relationships with students** by actively listening to students and taking an interest in what they say.

Break down "codes of silence" and help students feel empowered to come forward and share concerns and problems with a trusted adult. At one school, administrators used a faculty meeting to identify students who lacked a solid connection with an adult at school. They provided faculty with a roster of enrolled students and asked them to place a mark next to students with whom they had a warm relationship. For students without a mark next to their name, popular, well-liked teachers and staff were asked to reach out and develop positive connections with them.

Help students feel more **connected to their classmates and the school.** One teacher asked her elementary students to write down names of classmates they wanted to sit next to. If a student's name did not appear on anyone's list, the teacher placed that student's desk next to a friendly or outgoing classmate in an effort to help the student develop friendships. This effort could be easily adapted with middle or high school-aged students by asking students to identify one or two classmates they would like to be partnered with for a project and assigning any student not named on a list to be partnered with a friendly or outgoing classmate.

Adults can also help students **identify clubs or teams at school** they can join or encourage them to start their own special interest group.

Schools can also support positive school climates by implementing school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs. These programs actively teach students what appropriate behavior looks like in a variety of settings, including in the classroom, with their friends, or among adults. Teachers frequently praise prosocial behavior they observe and encourage students' good behavior. PBIS can improve academic outcomes for schools and has been shown to reduce the rates of school bullying.

While teachers and staff can foster relationships and connectedness among the student body, **students themselves have a role to play** in sustaining safe school climates. They should be actively engaged in their schools, encouraged to reach out to classmates who might be lonely or isolated, and empowered to intervene safely when they witness gossiping, teasing, and bullying.

STEP 8. CONDUCT TRAINING FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The final component of a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan is to identify training needs for all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, and administrators; students; parents; and school resource officers or local law enforcement. **School safety is everyone's responsibility.** Anyone who could come forward with concerning information or who might be involved in the assessment process should be provided with training. Effective training addresses the goals and steps of an assessment, the type of information that should be brought forward, and how individuals can report their concerns. It might be beneficial for staff and students to hear presentations, see videos, and role-play scenarios so they have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and the steps they can take to keep their school safe. Each audience will require a slightly different message, but some stakeholders may also benefit from attending training together, such as parents and students, or school faculty/staff and law enforcement personnel. When developing a training program, consider how frequently each stakeholder will receive training, and whether to vary the delivery method of trainings. Also, each audience may have unique needs.

Faculty, staff, and administrators

Every adult at school needs training related to threat assessment and violence prevention, **including administrative, maintenance, custodial, and food service staff.** Training can include who should be notified when concerning or threatening information is discovered, what information should be brought forward, how school staff might learn about information, and the steps school staff can take to safely intervene with concerning or threatening situations. Providing training on other topics, such as suicide awareness and prevention, conflict resolution, mental health, and developmental disabilities, might also allow school faculty, staff, and administrators to foster positive school climates.

Students

Students need training on the threat assessment process, where to report concerns, and what information they should bring forward. Students also need assurances that they can make a report to the Team or another trusted adult **anonymously**, that their information will be **followed up on**, and will be kept **confidential**. Training can also educate students about other actionable steps they can take to cultivate a safe school climate, including ways they can safely intervene with bullying, gossip, or name-calling. Messaging should demonstrate to students that there is a big **difference between "snitching," "ratting," or "tattling," and seeking help.** While snitching is informing on someone for personal gain, here, students are encouraged to come forward when they are worried about a friend who is struggling, or when they are trying to keep someone from getting hurt. Remind students that if they are concerned about a classmate or friend, they need to keep speaking out until that person gets the help they need. Finally, maintaining a safe school climate includes providing students with training or lessons to acquire skills and abilities to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, cope with stress, seek help, and engage in positive social interactions.

Parents.

Parents should also be trained on the threat assessment process at their child's school and their role in that process. They should be clear on who to call, when, and what information they should be ready to provide. Parents can also benefit from training that helps them recognize when children

and teenagers may be in emotional trouble or feeling socially isolated. Training can also reduce the stigma around mental, emotional, or developmental issues and provide information on available resources and when they should seek professional assistance.

Law enforcement and school resource officers.

Not every school will have a school resource officer, but schools can still develop relationships with local law enforcement agencies and personnel. Schools can encourage local officers to co-teach classes at the school, serve as coaches or assistant coaches of sports teams, and work with parents and teachers at after-school events. In some communities without school resource officers, local law enforcement agencies have encouraged officers to “adopt a school,” stopping by the school to greet and become familiar with students and teachers, eating lunch on campus, or doing paperwork in an office at the school. Like parents and teachers, local law enforcement and school resource officers need to be aware of the school’s threat assessment process and their own responsibilities once a threat is identified. Training for law enforcement and school resource officers should also provide familiarity with emergency response procedures the school has in place and the layout of the campus. Officers and school staff might benefit from attending training together so that all parties are aware of the point at which local law enforcement should be involved in an investigation. This would also allow officers to get to know administrators, teachers, counselors, facilities and maintenance personnel, and other school staff. It is much easier to work through an emergency situation when schools and law enforcement are already familiar with each other and their procedures.

CONCLUSION

Despite having a comprehensive targeted violence prevention plan in place, and despite a school and Team’s best efforts at prevention, incidents of targeted school violence may still occur. It is critical to develop and implement emergency response plans and procedures and provide training on them to all stakeholders. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends that emergency response plans be developed with input from local law enforcement and first responders.⁵ For example, procedures should be developed for reporting emergencies, evacuation procedures and routes, use of emergency notification systems, and information regarding local hospitals or trauma centers. Law enforcement and first responders should be apprised of these plans and procedures and know how to implement them.

Everyone has a role in preventing school violence and creating safe school climates. The threat assessment procedures detailed in this guide are an important component of school safety and security efforts and have been determined to be the best-practice in the prevention of targeted school violence. The model highlights that students can engage in a continuum of concerning behaviors and communications, the vast majority of which may not be threatening or violent. Nevertheless, it encourages schools to set a low threshold when identifying students who might be engaging in unusual behavior, or experiencing distress, so that early interventions can be applied to reduce the risk of violence or other negative outcomes.

Appendix 4 - Risk Assessment Inquiry: A Summary of the Secret Service Eleven Key Questions

A Risk Assessment is a systematic process that is designed to Identify situations/persons who are struggling or are of concern, Investigate the situation and gather information, assess the situation, and manage the situation and mitigate the risk. Threat Assessments can help determine whether somebody is on a pathway to violence. Threat Assessments should focus on discovering risk factors and behaviors associated with acts of targeted violence and help potential offenders overcome the underlying sources of their problems. Engaging subjects can be critical to preventing violence and harm; and should not be punitive.

Threat assessments are part of a larger on-going approach to keeping students and schools safe. The problem of violence in schools isn't created by schools – it's a symptom of community violence – but schools can play an important role in providing solutions and preventing violence. The principles that guide our threat assessment ideas and protocols are derived from decades of research and practice to determine **why** a student made a threat and then prevent the threat from being carried out.

How should the information from a threat assessment inquiry be organized and analyzed? Information from research and interviews conducted during a threat assessment inquiry should be guided by the following 11 key questions:

1. WHAT ARE THE STUDENT'S MOTIVE(S) AND GOALS?

What motivated the student to make the statements or take the actions that caused him or her to come to attention?

Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist?

Does the student have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?

What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the potential attacker feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternative?

2. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY COMMUNICATIONS SUGGESTING IDEAS OR INTENT TO ATTACK?

What, if anything, has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written in a diary, journal, or website concerning his or her ideas and/or intentions?

3. HAS THE SUBJECT SHOWN INAPPROPRIATE INTEREST IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

School attacks or attackers?

Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon)?

Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers)?

4. HAS THE STUDENT ENGAGED IN ATTACK-RELATED BEHAVIORS? THESE BEHAVIORS MIGHT INCLUDE:

Developing an attack idea or plan?

Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons?

Casing or checking out possible sites and areas for attack?

Rehearsing attacks or ambushes?

5. DOES THE STUDENT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT AN ACT OF TARGETED VIOLENCE?

How organized is the student's thinking and behavior?

Does the student have the means, e.g., access to a weapon, to carry out an attack?

6. IS THE STUDENT EXPERIENCING HOPELESSNESS, DESPERATION AND/OR DESPAIR?

Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation and/or despair?

Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss and/or loss of status?

Is the student known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event/

Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal or "accident-prone"?

Has the student engaged in behavior that suggests that he or she has considered ending their life?

7. DOES THE STUDENT HAVE A TRUSTING RELATIONSHIP WITH AT LEAST ONE RESPONSIBLE ADULT?

Does this student have at least one relationship with an adult where the student feels that he or she can confide in the adult and believes that the adult will listen without judging or jumping to conclusions? (Students with trusting relationships with adults may be direct away from violence and despair and toward hope.)

Is the student emotionally connected to – or disconnected from – other student(s)?

Has the student previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he or she need intervention or supportive services?

8. DOES THE STUDENT SEE VIOLENCE AS AN ACCEPTABLE – OR DESIRABLE – OR THE ONLY WAY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS?

Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?

Has the student been "dared" by others to engage in an act of violence?

9. IS THE STUDENT'S CONVERSATION AND "STORY" CONSISTENT WITH HIS OR HER ACTIONS?

Does information from collateral interviews and from the student's own behavior confirm or dispute what the student says is going on?

10. ARE OTHER PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE STUDENT'S POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE?

Are those who know the student concerned that he or she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?

Are those who know the student concerned about a specific target?

Have those who know the student witnessed recent changes or escalations in mood and behavior?

11. WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT AFFECT THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN ATTACK?

What factors in the student's life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that the student will attempt to mount an attack at school?

What is the response of other persons who know about the student's ideas or plan to mount an attack? (Do those who know about the student's ideas actively discourage the student from acting violently, encourage the student to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with attack, etc.?)

Use the information gathered to help determine the seriousness of the concern and to develop the action and support plan.

The analysis of the information gathered during the Threat Assessment Inquiry should answer the following two questions:

Is the behavior of the student consistent with the movement on a path towards an attack?

Does the student's current situation or setting incline him or her toward or away from targeted violence?

Appendix 5 – Remote Instruction Plan

Menands UFSD Emergency Remote Instruction Information

Availability of Devices and Internet Access

In order to facilitate the educational process in the event of an emergency situation that would require remote instruction for students, the school district completes the annual Student Digital Resources collection process to better inform how this plan can serve the school community. The purpose of this survey is so that the school district can understand the level of access to technology that students within the school district have, primarily in regard to their access to the internet and computers.

To support remote learning, the district will make computer devices and hotspot devices available to the greatest extent possible. The district currently operates on a one-to-one device capacity and can therefore provide devices to all students and staff. In the event that internet access is not possible and that hotspot devices are not available, the school district shall work with community partners to help ensure that public access wi-fi points are available for students and families throughout the community to allow for them to participate in remote learning.

The school district's technology department shall be responsible for assisting students with internet access, including, but not limited to, the use of hotspot devices, and may also be tasked with servicing devices that may not be working properly. This group may also be responsible for providing on-site instructional support for technology integration and for providing learning opportunities through tutorial videos and other virtual means.

Should the school district determine in advance that emergency conditions may require the school district to provide remote instruction during the following day(s), students and staff shall be informed of this possibility via their existing internal and external communication channels with as much advance notice as possible. The school district may communicate this information via the public address system, verbal communication, letters sent home, social media posts, phone calls, and via text messages.

Inevitably, there may be students in the school community for whom remote learning is not appropriate or possible. In these situations, the school district shall assess that individual's unique needs and try to accommodate them with in-person learning, to the extent that is possible. The school district may also consider utilizing 1:1 aides, instruction by phone, or the creation and dissemination of paper materials to the students home, as well as other methods, to better support their individual needs.

Provision of Special Education and Related Services

Should remote learning become necessary, the school district shall ensure that special education services are provided to students who need them, in accordance with their individualized education programs (IEPs) and to ensure that they receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). All of the modifications and accommodations afforded to special education students via their IEP will be afforded to that student, regardless of their primary instruction model. In order to facilitate the provision of special education and related services the school district shall ensure that:

- There is consistent communication between committees on special education and program providers, with plans for monitoring and communicating student progress and a commitment to shared resources.
- There is access to the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology to meet the unique disability-related needs of each student.
- Related services, such as speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling, shall be provided to students, consistent with their IEPs.
- Students are provided with prioritized standards-based lessons via the school district's digital platform.
- Students are directly provided with modifications and accommodations as per their IEP
- All differentiated assignments shall be compliant with NYS guidelines and the student's IEP
- Accommodations shall be provided through the student's 504 plans
- Students are provided with daily synchronous instruction via Google Meet

Expectations for Time Spent in Modalities and Foundation Aid

In the event that the school district were required to go to emergency remote instruction, the school district schedule shall mirror what the in-person schedule for the day would have been. Students shall be provided with opportunities throughout the course of the day to interact with teachers and their peers during live instruction, including group work and question and answer sessions within the classroom structure. For state aid purposes, the school district estimates that they will spend seven hours of time in remote instruction due to emergency conditions.

Appendix 6 - SRO/SRD Contract

Appendix 7 - Continuation of Operations During Public Health Emergencies

Menands Union Free School District Continuation of Operations Plan

Approved: 3/8/2021

This plan has been developed in accordance with NYS legislation S8617B/A10832.

Promulgation

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

This plan has been developed with the input of Menands Association of Teachers, as required by the amended New York State Labor Law.

No content of this plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the rights and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

This plan has been approved in accordance with requirements applicable to the agency, jurisdiction, authority, or district, as represented by the signature of the authorized individual below.

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As the authorized official of Menands Union Free School District, I hereby attest that this plan has been developed, approved, and placed in full effect in accordance with S8617B/A10832 which amends New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable, to address public health emergency planning requirements.

Signed on this day:

By: Jennifer Cannavo

Signature: _____

Title: Superintendent

Record of Changes

Date of Change	Description of Change	Implemented by

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Purpose, Scope, and Assumptions

Purpose

This plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law paragraphs k and l of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable. These laws were amended by the passing of legislation S8617B/A10832 signed by the Governor of New York State on September 7, 2020, requires public employers to adopt a plan for operations in the event of a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease. The plan includes the identification of essential positions, facilitation of remote work for non-essential positions, provision of personal protective equipment, and protocols for supporting contact tracing.

Scope

This plan was developed exclusively for and is applicable to Menands Union Free School District. This plan is pertinent to a declared public health emergency in the State of New York which may impact our operations; and it is in the interest of the safety of our employees and contractors, and the continuity of our operations that we have promulgated this plan.

Planning Assumptions

This plan was developed based on information, best practices, and guidance available as of the date of publication. The plan was developed to largely reflect the circumstances of the current Coronavirus pandemic but may also be applicable to other infectious disease outbreaks.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this plan:

- The health and safety of our employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance
- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations.
- Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety
- The public and our constituency expects us to maintain a level of mission essential operations
- Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement
- The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the governor
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor that is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform their job

Concept of Operations

The Superintendent of Menands Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations,

and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of Menands Union Free School District shall be notified by email notification, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Administrators, Faculty, Staff, students, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care providers, employee unions and community groups will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of emails, phone calls, website updates and messenger accounts. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The district Communications Specialist will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of Menands Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor’s office, directing the implementation of changes as necessary.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Menands Union Free School District, their designee, or their successor will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

Mission Essential Functions

When confronting events that disrupt normal operations, Menands Union Free School District is committed to ensuring that essential functions will be continued even under the most challenging circumstances.

Essential functions are those functions that enable an organization to:

1. Maintain the safety of students, employees, contractors, and our constituency
2. Provide vital services
3. Provide services required by law
4. Sustain quality operations
5. Uphold the core values of Menands Union Free School District

The Menands Union Free School District has identified as critical only those priority functions that are required or are necessary to provide vital services. During activation of this plan, all other activities may be suspended to enable the organization to concentrate on providing the critical functions and building the internal capabilities necessary to increase and eventually restore operations. Appropriate communications with employees, contractors, our constituents, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential functions are prioritized according to:

- The time criticality of each essential function
- Interdependency of a one function to others
- The recovery sequence of essential functions and their vital processes

The mission essential functions for Menands Union Free School District have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Student Education/Continuity of Learning	Provide curriculum and instruction to meet NYSED expectations and standards.
Child Nutrition	Provide meals to the district’s students during in-person, remote and virtual learning models

Transportation	Arrange for transportation by qualified drivers for students, or for the delivery of food or other materials.
Social Emotional Well-Being	Have trained staff and faculty members to offer resources and referrals to students indicating the need for counseling services and intervention
Facilities	Maintenance and upkeep of the district's buildings, lands, playgrounds/fields and inventory
Community Engagement	Establish and maintain regular channels of communications with administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians of students, local health department officials and health care providers, employee unions and community groups.
Special Education	Special education services are available to any student who qualifies
Child Care for essential employee families	Coordinate with neighboring organizations the child care of families that are deemed essential during health emergencies
Technology and Connectivity	Distribution of laptops and internet connectivity devices for families and staff to facilitate continued education in remote learning environments necessary for continuity of instruction and education. Also responsible for troubleshooting technical issues that may arise during the virtual learning process, the offering of best practices in communication to ensure that students are able to access curricular materials, and for helping staff members disseminate information related to both academic and social-emotional education.
Business & District Office Functions	Oversight and management of the functions performed by employees in the superintendent's office and the business office to ensure that regular business operations and services continue as necessary and/or mandated. Appropriate communications with students, families, employees, contractors, educational community, and other stakeholders will be an ongoing priority.

Essential Positions

Each essential function identified above requires certain positions on-site to effectively operate. The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these can be conducted remotely and do not need to be identified in this section.

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Child Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Cook • Food Service Helper (2) • Transportation Contractor 	Meals (breakfast and lunch) will be prepared and delivered to the students. In the event there are no food service employees, an agreement with North Colonie CSD has been made that will provide student lunches.
Technology Maintenance and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor IT Director & Technician from 	Oversee the function of the network and assist in resolving remote operation malfunctions, and to conduct routine cleaning, disinfection & maintenance.

	South Colonie CSD.	
Maintain Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodial Staff • Maintenance Staff 	Staff will occupy buildings during shutdowns for security and emergency purposes
Business and School Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Manager • Superintendent 	Oversee the day-to-day operations of the district

Reducing Risk Through Remote Work and Staggered Shifts

Through assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at work sites.

Remote Work Protocols

Non-essential employees and contractors able to accomplish their functions remotely will be enabled to do so to the greatest extent possible. Working remotely requires:

1. Identification of staff who will work remotely.
 - a. **Teachers and Special Education Teachers & Service Providers**
 - b. **School Counselors, Psychologists, & Social Worker**
 - c. **School Administrators and Business Office Employees**
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
 - a. School Administration: School Principal, Superintendent and Business Manager
3. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include:
 - a. Internet capable laptop
 - b. Necessary peripherals
 - c. Access to VPN and/or secure network drives
 - d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties.
 - e. A solution for telephone communications
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff.

All faculty and staff will function remotely at the direction of the Superintendent and Business Manager. All district mobile devices have been secured and compatible with non-district sanctioned wireless internet. Phone lines that have been identified as needing forwarded will be. Staff and students that have been identified to need connectivity assistance will be provided Chromebook and mobile “hot spots.”

Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be possible for personnel performing duties which are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will identify opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, Menands Union Free School District will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered.
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours.

Assignment of shift changes or staggering will come from the Business Manager and district Superintendent. At the time of an emergency shut down.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of infectious disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE which may be needed can include:

- Masks
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns and aprons

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there is a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. The Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated that supply chains were not able to keep up with increased demand for these products early in the pandemic. As such, we are including these supplies in this section as they are pertinent to protecting the health and safety of our employees and contractors.

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location.
2. Procurement of PPE
 - a. As specified in the amended law, public employers must be able to provide at least two pieces of each required type of PPE to each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months.
 - b. Public employers must be able to mitigate supply chain disruptions to meet this requirement.
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
 - a. PPE must be stored in a manner which will prevent degradation.
 - b. Employees and contractors must have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency.
 - c. The supply of PPE must be monitored to ensure integrity and to track usage rates.

The Business Manager and Purchasing Clerk are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the stock of PPE. The stockpile of PPE is kept indoors in a secure and locked room of the building to prevent damage or theft. All employees have access to the PPE at all times, if the stockpile needs accessed employees can request through the Business Manager or Purchasing Clerk. At least, eight weeks of stockpile of staff and student PPE will be kept on hand, masks, face shields, nitrile gloves, eye protection and N95s (nurses only) will be kept in accordance with the NYSED Reopening Guidance quantities. In addition to the PPE, extra cleaning supplies and products are kept as well.

The Menands UFSD has accounts set up with numerous product vendors. Orders will be made as quickly as possible. However, due to potential supply chain shortages, the district will keep the stockpile during non-Health emergencies.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. When a staff member is exposed, the District will follow applicable Albany County Department of Health, New York State Department of Health, and CDC guidelines as is required and best practices.

The Menands Union Free School District recognizes there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive for a communicable disease. As stated above, the District will follow CDC/public health recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health office for additional guidance and support as needed.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

CDC/public health guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. As possible, employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
 - a. High traffic/high touch areas and areas which are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected at least hourly.
 - b. Maintenance staff, under the direction of the district's Head Custodian, will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting common areas, based on the requirements of each individual situation and influenced by factors such as frequency of use, the specifics of the communicable disease, and recommendations from local, state, and federal authorities.
2. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
3. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected.
4. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
5. Staff will follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work and off-site visits. This information may be used by Menands Union Free School District to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

Districts may assist with contact tracing by:

1. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members
2. Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
3. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time, and where in the school they visited.
4. Assisting the local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program

No outside visitors or volunteers will be allowed on school campuses, except for the safety and well-being of students. Parents/guardians will report to the front office and not go beyond unless it is for the safety or well-being of their child. Essential visitors and contractors to facilities will be required to wear face coverings and will be restricted in their access to our school buildings. Visitors must follow all safety protocols and sign in and out of buildings providing the building with Name, Contact Information, Purpose of Visit/Locations, Date and Time.

District administration will keep the records at the building level and have them readily available for the Albany Department of Health via the school district's appointed liaison.

Housing for Essential Employees

There are circumstances within a public health emergency when it may be prudent to have essential employees lodged in such a manner which will help prevent the spread of the subject communicable disease to protect these employees from potential exposures, thus helping to ensure their health and safety and the continuity of Menands Union Free School District's essential operations.

If such a need arises, hotel rooms are expected to be the most viable option. If hotel rooms are for some reason deemed not practical or ideal, or if there are no hotel rooms available, Menands Union Free School District will coordinate with the Albany County Office of Emergency Management to help identify and arrange for these housing needs. The Business Manager will be responsible for coordinating this.