

**NEWARK VALLEY
CENTRAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**DISTRICT-WIDE
SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

Updated July 2022

INTRODUCTION

The Incident Management Manual provides information and incident plan guidelines to be incorporated in dealing with most incident or events of critical nature within the school district. Because no two schools are the same, no manual will provide all the necessary information to prevent every incident. The organizational guidelines being provided in this manual are intended to organize a crisis management team so that they, as a group, can better respond.

Communities demand that schools remain safe havens for education. While security services are provided and the quality of those services is reviewed regularly, we can never predict exactly when an incident is going to happen. This unpredictability results in the need for every school employee and all administrators to be prepared should a critical incident occur. The initial response to a critical incident must be quickly and effectively accomplished. This manual is intended to be a tool that will help prepare principals, program managers, and other key administrators for that initial response.

Newark Valley Central School District is prepared to provide any assistance needed to help understand and implement the guidelines explained in this workbook. Staff members are available to conduct training sessions on the manual and to offer advice to individuals.

Newark Valley District-Wide Safety Team meets on a regular basis to review the district's safety plans and goals in a continuous effort to improve the safety of the students, staff and facilities. While no plan can cover all emergencies that can arise, the guidelines in this manual are intended to be a flexible framework around which emergencies can be responded to.

The District-Wide Safety Team will work to improve the safety plan on a consistent basis in order to identify potential crises not already identified and prepare plans that may assist in addressing them. The District-Wide Safety Plan will be shared with appropriate agencies as identified by the District-Wide Safety Team for their use in responding to and assisting with incidents affecting the Newark Valley Central School District, staff and students.

The buildings are responsible for initiating Building Level Safety Teams that are charged with developing and updating the Building Level Safety Plans for their facilities. These plans must be updated annually and must supplement the District-wide Safety Plan. All such plans and any revisions must be approved by the Board of Education prior to the end of each school year.

When developing/updating the plans, each group shall:

1. Notify the District-wide Safety Team of any concerns or developments or changes and deliver updated plans for inclusion in the appendix of the District-Wide Safety Plan.
2. Disseminate the changes within their structural group.
3. Add training where possible to test responses based upon changes made.

After a crisis has occurred, a Post Incident analysis shall be conducted by the appropriate group to analyze how effective the building level safety plan and/or district-wide safety plan was in dealing with the event and make recommendations for changes or improvements. This review will be conducted by the Building Level Emergency Response Team, the Building Level Safety Team and the District-Wide Safety Team.

This manual is broken down into five categories:

Section 1

General Considerations and Planning Guidelines:

2. District-Wide Safety Team roles and responsibilities,
3. Building Level Safety Team roles and responsibilities,
4. Building Level Emergency Response Team roles and responsibilities
5. Incident Command System and National Incident Management System compliance,
6. Interacting with the media,
7. Parent/Guardian communications
8. Post incident recovery

Section 2

Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention:

9. Tools for identifying and reporting potential risks
10. Memorandum of Understanding between responding and/or reporting agencies
11. New York State Police threat assessment tools
12. New York State Police campus safety audit
13. Hazards identification

Section 3

Response:

14. Detailed Guidelines and tools for specific incident threat types and recommended response actions by threat type. See Index of Section 3 for list of incidents contained within Section 3 Response.

Section 4

Recovery:

15. Establishment of Post Incident Response Team
16. Resources for recovery

Section 5

Appendices:

17. Quick Look
18. Building Level Safety Plans
19. Emergency Closing Procedure
20. Campus Evacuation Procedures
21. Campus Emergency Evacuation Destinations and facility Information
22. Shelter Plan
23. Communications Protocols
24. Department Phone Trees
25. School Crime Scene Management
26. NIMS Incident Forms
27. Campus Maps and Building Floor Plans

As a matter of security Section 1: General Consideration and Planning Guidelines is the only section which is subject to the Freedom of Information Law and as such only generic information will be posted in this section. Building level and District level emergency response plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under article six of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law.

District-Wide Safety Team

The District-Wide Safety Team consists of members representing a variety of backgrounds and skills which provide for a diversity of views of safety and includes representatives of the Newark Valley Board of Education members, District Superintendent, Work Environment Health & Safety Coordinator, Facilities Supervisor, Administration, Principals, and Teachers from each district building, School Nurse and parents. Student representation is recommended for this team. While there is no maximum number of representatives on the District-Wide Safety Team, the Team will always be comprised of the following minimum representative groups:

4. District Superintendent
5. Facilities Director
6. Work Environment Health & Safety Coordinator
7. Administration
8. Teachers

The District-Wide Safety Team is responsible for:

9. developing, reviewing and maintaining the District-Wide Safety Plan to include:
 - o identification of sites of potential emergency
 - o description of plans for taking the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate:
 - o School cancellations
 - o Early dismissal
 - o Evacuation
 - o Sheltering
 - o policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school
 - o policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers other school personnel and visitors to the school
 - o appropriate prevention and intervention strategies, such as:
 - o collaborative agreements with State and local law enforcement officials designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained, including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and are effectively and fairly recruited
 - o nonviolent conflict resolution training programs

- extended day and other school safety programs
- policies and procedures for contacting law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident
- description of the arrangements for obtaining assistance from emergency services organizations and local governmental agencies
- procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials, including the county officials responsible for implementation of article 2-B of Executive Law (see appendix)
- identification of district resources which may be available for use during an emergency
- description of procedures to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies, including identification of the officials authorized to make decisions and of the staff members assigned to provide assistance during emergencies
- procedures for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students of the district in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal
- procedures relating to school building security, including, where appropriate, the use of school safety officers and/or security devices or procedures
- procedures for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to the identification of family, community and environmental factors to teachers, administrators, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district or board, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information
- procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students
- the identification of appropriate responses to emergencies, including protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage-takings, intrusions and kidnappings
- strategies for improving communication among students and between students and staff and reporting of potentially violent incidents, such as the conflict resolution, creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence and establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence
- a description of the duties of hall monitors and any other school safety personnel, the training required of all personnel acting in a school security capacity, and the hiring and screening process for all personnel acting in a school security capacity
- a system for informing all educational agencies within such school district of a disaster

certain information about each educational agency located in the school district, including information on school population, number of staff, transportation needs and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each such agency

10. reviewing Building Level Safety Plans for coordination with the District-Wide Safety Plan,
11. recommending changes to the plan for Board of Education adoption,
12. hearing concerns of employees regarding health and safety concerns and considerations,
13. reviewing Building Level Safety Team plans and schedules for drills
 - procedures for review and the conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan, including the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials
14. reviewing and/or recommending policies regarding health and safety to report to the Board of Education
 - policies for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students of the district in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal;
 - policies relating to school building security, including, where appropriate, the use of school safety officers and/or security devices or procedures;
 - policies 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, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district or board, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information;
 - policies for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students;

BUILDING LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

Each member of the Building Level Emergency Response Team (BLERT) must be in place and comfortable with his/her role long before an incident occurs. The Team members need to receive information and training on a regular basis. School administration must rely on the members of the Building Level Emergency Response Team to perform tasks that will ensure the safety of students and other school personnel during an incident.

BLERT members are not expected to place their lives or health or safety in jeopardy in the execution of their roles as an emergency responder and as such heroic efforts are not expected to be performed. BLERT members need to apply proper risk analysis of any situation prior to responding to an incident.

The membership of each Building Level Emergency Response Team is determined annually by the administration and the Building Level Safety Team for each building. The membership should consist of an immediately accessible core group of school personnel who have the knowledge and skills to handle an emergency situation. In addition to the school principals and assistant principals, members should be selected based upon specific needs during an emergency. These members should include:

- guidance counselors,
- maintenance personnel,
- nurses,
- psychologists/social workers,
- security personnel
- selected teachers
- individuals with skills in:
 - CPR/AED
 - First Aid
 - Firefighting
 - Rescue Training
 - Physical Assistance

BLERT Team members will respond to incidents in compliance with the National Response Plan as outlined and detailed in by the Department of Homeland Security under Presidential Directive HSPD-5 which established the National Incident Management System utilizing the Incident Command System which establishes response and authority to act with an incident based upon an all hazards approach.

Members of the Building Level Emergency Response Team should receive or be trained to and have the ability to identify changes in student behavior or recognize events or incidents that could affect the school. Once these changes or events have occurred the BLERT must take action to avert the situation or diffuse the problem. The BLERT will implement and adapt appropriate actions from the District-Wide Safety Plan where appropriate. The BLERT will meet on a regular basis to discuss the Building Level Safety Plans and the District-Wide Safety Plan and discuss areas of concern in the school.

The BLERT shall participate in training exercises and may conduct their own training in accordance with **Section 01-08 Training and Updating**. The BLERT shall make recommendations to the Building

Building Level Emergency Response Team

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Level Safety Teams and the District-Wide Safety Team for changes to any plans or documents that pertain to campus and facility safety.

Teachers that are members of the BLERT will need a support system of a staff member to take over supervision of the students regularly assigned to the BLERT member should an incident occur so the BLERT member may provide the assistance necessary for the incident. Support staff for BLERT function coverage is to be included in **Appendix C Building Level Safety Plan**. All BLERT members are to work within the Incident Command System in place for the district.

All members of the BLERT shall be given copies of appropriate safety documents for their school including the District-Wide Safety Plan, Building Level Safety Plan, and Quick Look for their use and periodic review.

Members of the BLERT shall establish communications protocols for use within the team during incidents. Communications protocols are included in **Appendix I Communication Protocols**.

The list of all BLERT members for each building are included in **Appendix C Building Level Safety Plans** and shall be reviewed annually and updated whenever a change to the BLERT membership occurs. The listing shall include name, contact information, responsibilities and specific credentials (if any).

TIPS FOR BETTER BUILDING SECURITY

HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AND WHAT YOU SHOULD DO FOR BETTER BUILDING SECURITY

- Lock all exterior doors that are not being used for activities.
- Lock all interior areas containing expensive equipment such as computers.
- Make sure that all door locks and window latches are in good working order.
- If you see someone in your building you do not know, determine who he or she is and why he or she is in your building. All staff are required to wear identification badges and guests/visitor are required to wear visitor passes.
- Report stolen or missing keys immediately.
- Keep trees and shrubs trimmed so that windows and doors are not blocked.
- Check your exterior lighting to make sure everything is working properly.
- Exterior gates and other entrance devices should be secured properly.
- At night, window shades should be down and closed to prevent easy "casing" by would-be burglars.

If you need additional information about how to improve the security of your building, call the Health & Safety Officer, Scott Wandell, at x 3415.

ROLE LIST:

Incident Command

Incident Command

Incident Commander

Incident Command Liaison

Incident Safety Officer

School Site Security

Public Relations Liaison

Parent Reunion Organizer and Liaison

Information Officer

Communication and Recorder

Operations Section

Operations Chief

Student Accounting

Planning Section

Planning Chief

Staff Assignments

Counseling

Logistics Section

Logistics Chief

Off-Site Transportation Coordinator

Off-Site Evacuation Coordinator

Finance Section

Finance Chief

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)

Permanently assigning specific areas of responsibility to members of the crisis management team provides each member with the opportunity to specialize in the management of his or her area. Plans are made, policy established, and training conducted in advance of any emergency incident. This type of forward thinking will be needed during a critical incident and is a key component to a school being properly prepared.

The **ICS** also addresses the uncertainty of exactly who will be in the building during an emergency. When assigning the management of critical roles in the **ICS**, multiple substitutes are named to assure coverage at all times. This may require some individuals to be responsible for more than one task, but only if the primary person is out of the building. While the **ICS** identifies roles for the members of the crisis management team, all school faculty members have an organized reporting system that lists their specific functions during an emergency. Teachers with students in class will have specific functions, as will teachers not assigned a class when an emergency occurs. The Building Level Safety Plans for each facility are included in the Appendix and are updated annually.

Emergency responders are required to use **ICS** to manage emergency events. Because of this, a school with assigned roles for administrators and teachers is able to work more efficiently with the responding local, state or federal agencies. These agencies will be able to quickly identify the schools Incident Commander and liaison, which will quickly answer questions about the incident and school operations.

Roles for which personnel need to be assigned include:

Incident Commander – this may be the building principal or designee or the District Superintendent or designee depending upon the scope of the incident. The Incident Commander is the overall leader during an incident, makes decisions based upon information and suggestions provided by other members of the Incident Command. The Incident Commander may retain responsibilities for other tasks or may delegate them to other

members of the ICS or to BLERT members based upon incident

Student Accounting - This member is responsible for ensuring that all teachers have an accurate accounting of students and for coordinating efforts in accounting for missing students. This role involves planning for incidents and communicating with faculty on the importance of removing rosters during an incident so student accountability can take place.

Transportation Coordinator – Some incidents may require moving the student population off school grounds. Depending on the time of day and severity of the incident, students may need to be dismissed from an off-site location. The person responsible for organizing this operation should coordinate the arrival of buses and the loading of students onto the proper bus. This process will become complicated with the arrival of parents and/or guardians seeking to pick up their children. Bus rosters and planned bus route information shall be maintained current. Component school transportation coordinators will be notified and efforts for transportation in the event of an incident requiring evacuation to an off- site location will be directed by the transportation Coordinator.

Off-site Evacuation Coordination - This activity is required whenever the district buildings are evacuated based upon the incident and severity. Newark Valley Central Schools has a written sheltering agreement which is detailed in the District-Wide Safety Plan for evacuation. Unless the incident requires evacuation further off-site. This is the destination for campus evacuations. The Incident Commander shall determine whether further evacuation is required

Agency Liaison – The Incident Commander may appoint an agency liaison to interface with other local, state or federal agencies during an incident. All information released from the liaison must be approved by the Incident Commander.

Parent Reunion Liaison -this position is required to coordinate efforts to reunite parents and/or guardians with children for release from school. Records of release of students are required for any child not returned home on a bus from an incident. This liaison shall report to the release area and coordinate with the Public Relations Liaison regarding location, time and requirements for release of students during and after an incident.

Public Information Officer -the Public Information Officer is responsible for the timely issuance of information to media and the public regarding the incident. No information regarding the incident shall be released without the approval of the Incident Commander. This position may be staffed by the Incident Commander based upon the complexity of the incident.

Communication and recording -During an incident the recording of events and timelines is required to assist in determining goals and objectives for each operation period based upon the complexity of the incident. This information may be required for reconstructing the incident by police or fire departments, legal proceedings after the event and for planning purposes to improve responses to incidents. This person should keep detailed record of all events, decisions, and actions including annotation of time.

Counseling -After an incident of significance counseling for student, staff and faculty may be required. This person is responsible for providing intervention for people affected and may need to coordinate the efforts of outside organizations in assisting in the needs of those involved. The Post Incident Response Team shall be mobilized based upon specific needs in recovery for the district.

The incident command system positions for each building are addressed in each building's Building Level Safety Plan in Appendix C. Forms for use in association with the Incident Command System are located in the Appendix K.

STAGING AREA

During a school crisis, the expected response to a school by the media, community residents, and parents will create without a plan in place. Every school must be prepared for the possibility of an evacuation during an emergency or crisis. The logistics of moving a student population must be planned and fully understood by all those responsible for the safety and security of children.

The Incident Commander or person designated to supervise the staging process must identify local areas that can be utilized during a crisis. Arrangements and agreements to use these areas need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. These areas must be large enough for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, while also isolated from the incident. This information is included in the Building Level Safety Plans in Appendix C.

OFF-SITE EVACUATION OF STUDENTS

The default off-site evacuation of students for the Newark Valley Central School District is included in the District-Wide Safety Plan and Building Level Safety Plans. This location should be used for bomb threat evacuations or anytime students need to be moved a safe distance from the school campus.

Alternate off-site evacuation site will be determined by the Staging Officer or Incident Commander based upon the incident. When choosing an off-site evacuation location, an area that meets all of the criteria desired for evacuation should be considered and actions taken to provide for size, access, security and shelter need to be assessed and addressed prior to use. The alternate evacuation sites are identified in the District-Wide Safety Plan

Early dismissal may be considered in lieu of off-site evacuation if the primary evacuation site is not available and suitable alternative sheltering cannot be established.

MEDIA STAGING

Failing to prepare for the media response can easily become a public relations disaster. The local media is responsible for providing coverage of local events. A crisis or emergency at a school is a major news story and will solicit the response of countless news organizations. The Incident Commander must prepare for the media response and understand that ignoring the media is not an option during a crisis.

A designated media location for any incident needs to be established and communicated to all media outlets so that they know where to go to receive timely and accurate information regarding any incident. Should an alternate location need to be established due to the nature of the incident, the Incident Commander will notify the media outlets of the media staging area.

Because media representatives arrive simultaneously with police or fire department personnel a location for public information dissemination needs to be determined early during an incident. A media staging location should be close enough to the school for information access, but far enough away so as not to impede the efforts of police, fire, and school personnel. The area must be large enough to contain numerous vehicles without infringing on the traffic flow. This area also needs to be located away from other staging areas to prevent any interference between media representatives and the command post or students.

Everyone involved in the incident should know the location of the media staging area. This will allow for quick direction of incoming media vehicles and control over media representatives. Annual notification of the Media Staging area will be disseminated to the media.

BUS STAGING AREA

If the school's alternate off-site evacuation location is not large enough or capable of handling school bus traffic, a secondary bus staging/loading area must be identified. This area should be used if students are going to be dismissed from a location other than the primary school building.

When identifying the secondary bus area, choose the location based on size and traffic patterns to provide for the most efficient organization of the bus traffic. The Staging Officer shall request police assistance that will be needed to control area traffic if needed.

The Newark Valley central School District primary evacuation has been reviewed for adequacy to handle the needs of the Newark Valley Central School District. This allows for organized student pick-up, which could easily be monitored. Periodic review of the use of the primary off-site evacuation location needs to be accomplished with the facility supervisor.

COMMAND POST

During an emergency, it is important that all decisions be coordinated with the various participating agencies. The ICS allows for decisions to be made by the Incident Commander, based on information received from personnel managing other activities. This information exchange will work if there is only one central location for this information to be sent. Establishing a command post provides everyone involved in the incident with a location for information and updates. Police and fire departments will establish a command post for their operations during a school-based incident and will require communication with a school's incident command post for information and planning. Because of this relationship, **the school's incident command post must be located near the school but out of the direct danger zone.** This location should also allow for the police and fire operations and be large enough so each can operate independently when needed. The person in charge of the incident should respond to the school command post early in the emergency and remain at that location until the incident has concluded.

The command post should not be placed near the media staging area or parent reunification area to prevent interference while dealing with the incident. Any school personnel arriving to assist with the incident should report to the incident command post for updates or assignments. During events in which the school is not evacuated, the Incident Commander will establish a command post inside the school for efficient communications. The command post can be the principal's office, front reception area or any suitable location that is known to all personnel.

PARENT REUNIFICATION AREA

During a school incident that involves violence or a risk of injury to students, and the local media begins to broadcast events, parents will begin arriving at the school to retrieve their children. The arrival of parents may disrupt the efforts of those dealing with the crisis. Parent response planning allows for a quickly organized process where parents and students can be reunited in an orderly and accountable fashion. A well-organized parent reunification location will alleviate parents' fears and deliver students to their parents or guardians efficiently.

The parent reunification area should be away from any other of the staging areas and can be some distance from the school building. The location for this activity for a campus evacuation will be

identified based upon the incident. If the incident does not require student evacuation the Incident Commander, or designee will determine a safe and appropriate location for this function to occur. When choosing a parent reunion area, plan for the worst case scenario so that the location can support many parents and vehicles, provide shelter and possibly offer some isolated quiet areas.

All personnel involved in the incident must be aware of the parent reunification location and be able to direct parents to the area. Depending on the type of incident, parent reunification area may require security and traffic direction, which should be requested as soon as possible during the incident and coordinated with the police department during the incident.

Students will not be released without proper identification and authority to request release from the school.

CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE KIT

During a school evacuation, many essential items must be removed to help account for students, aid in medical treatment, and provide resources outside of the building.

Trying to arrange to remove these objects during an emergency will only add to the confusion and result in forgotten and misplaced items.

Implementing the critical incident response kit allows these items to be readily removed when the emergency strikes. This kit shall be maintained and updated on a regular basis and stored in a central location, with one person and an alternate being responsible for its removal from the school during an emergency.

Because of the number of items, a large rolling container has been provided to each building and designated for the response kit. While the list can be downloaded from a computer, a hard copy should be included in the kit since computer access away from the school is not guaranteed. The maintenance of the items contained in the response kit shall be assigned to one member of the BLERT for each building with a fixed schedule for updating the information.

The following items are recommended based on information and materials that will be needed at off-site locations. These items will also assist the police and fire departments in dealing with a crisis at a school:

- Emergency Care Cards
- Master roster of all classes
- Daily attendance list
- Master Bus Schedules
- Bell Schedule
- Faculty information sheets (emergency contacts)
- Copy of District-Wide Safety Plan including Quick Look
- Maps/footprints of school
- School Phone Lists
- List of internal phone numbers and locations of phones
- Flashlights (batteries refreshed every six months)
- Note pad/pens
- First Aid Kit

- Latex Gloves
- List of personnel with portable radios
- Location and instructions for mechanical systems (water, electric, gas, cable TV, etc.)
- Incident recorder log
- List of students and staff requiring special assistance
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

In addition to the above items, the visitor log and any extra school radios and cellular phones should be placed in the kit prior to leaving the building.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Incidents may arise that will require resources which are not typically available from within the Newark Valley School District organizations. As a result the district has and will enter into partnerships with other schools, businesses and agencies for support during incidents and the recovery from incidents.

The Newark Valley Central School District has confirmed by resolution a commitment to follow the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and is a participant in local, municipal and regional emergency planning groups with the intention of providing assistance to other school districts and agencies when the need arises and the resources available at Newark Valley. Newark Valley will also accept assistance from other schools, businesses and agencies during incident response and recovery.

From time to time memorandum of understandings will be prepared describing the anticipated relationship between the Newark Valley Central School District and supporting entities.

Partnerships may include but are not limited to:

- Off-site evacuation
- Sheltering
- Transportation
- Heavy equipment
- Fire services
- Emergency medical services
- Law enforcement

Newark Valley Central Schools is a willing participant in the Tioga County Department of Emergency Response system.

TRAINING AND UPDATING

The procedures, guidelines, protocols and assignments introduced in this manual are effective if everyone understands his or her role and actively helps refine the procedures. Critical incident training should become a regular event throughout the school year.

Recognizing and responding to a crisis takes practice. This can come in the form of open lectures, discussions, table top drills or actual training exercises. The more a plan is practiced and reviewed, the better that plan will be implemented. This understanding will also enhance the comfort level of faculty and reinforce that the school is prepared for an emergency.

Members of the BLERT should seek out specialized training opportunities designed for their area of responsibility during an incident. This type of training may involve attending a crisis planning conference or a temporary assignment elsewhere in the school system to allow each member of the BLERT to refine his or her role and add valuable suggestions to the plan. The Newark Valley Central School District professional development program and conference policies govern Newark Valley's participation in courses where costs are involved and conformance with these policies is required. These core members can then train the entire faculty on different aspects of crisis planning. This manual was developed as a work in progress and as such updates and site-specific procedures should be reviewed periodically and updated.

The Newark Valley Central School District has adopted an incident drill policy supporting execution of drills in various forms throughout the year. Each school Building Level Safety Team is responsible for developing an annual drill schedule and submitting this plan to the District-Wide Safety Team.

Critique of all drills is necessary in order to receive feedback on improving aspects of the District-Wide as well as Building Level Safety Plans. All participants are encouraged to submit observations, concerns or reinforcement to the various safety teams without fear of repercussion.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PREVENTION/PREPAREDNESS

- Identify building personnel trained in CPR, first aid, or other advanced medical training annually.
- Post this list of trained personnel in the main office, gym, and nurse' office.
- Communicate to all faculty and students that safety hazards should be reported immediately and will be fixed.
- Monitor projects that could create hazards during school hours.
- Playground areas should be checked daily for any conditions which could cause children to be cut, fall, or otherwise beinjured.
- Emergency care cards should be completed for all students and updated throughout the year.
- Insist that all accidents be reported, even if no visible harm or injury;
- Track the number of accidents that occur at the school.
- Follow established procedures for issuing medication.

- Do not allow teachers to give medical advice to students.
- If child is physically restrained during a fight or other incident, have the child checked by a qualified nurse or clinician.

- **Implement clear guidelines for the timely completion of injury reports.**

RESOURCES

The term resources refers to persons, equipment, tools and supplies necessary to support an incident. Newark Valley Central Schools inventories certain items based upon value and type, but other resources are not inventoried and need to be identified for use should an occasion arise. The National Incident Management System recommends that all resources are classified by type and classification. Newark Valley Schools has inventoried, typed and classified major components for easy identification for use in incidents.

Each building in the Newark Valley District consists of dedicated teachers, administrators, and support personnel. Many of these individuals have experience and training in fields that could help during an emergency situation. These special skills (e.g., in CPR, first aid, firefighting, law enforcement, security, mental health) could become priceless during an emergency and provide a great resource for helping with critical incident training in the school.

People with skills that are important to emergency incidents should be identified and included in planning and considered for participation in Building Level Emergency Response Teams. A listing of these people shall be included in the Building Level Safety Plans.

CRISIS PHONE DIRECTORY

The primary emergency telephone number for all emergencies is 911.

Dialing 911 from any campus phone does not require an access code to reach the emergency dispatch center.

The following information is maintained in each of The District-Wide Safety Plan and Building Level Safety Plans and shall be updated annually or whenever the composition of the District-Wide Safety Team, Building level Safety Team, Building Level Emergency Response Team, and Post Incident Response Team changes. The listings for these people are located in each Building Level Safety Plan in Appendix C and Appendix E.

- Phone tree for the crisis management team
- Emergency phone numbers
- Names and cell phone numbers of school personnel who have cell phones

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Ordinarily in a school emergency, all calls from the media should be referred to the Public Information Officer as part of the Incident Command Staff. All communications shall be made through the Incident Command System and all information must be cleared for release prior to communicating with any media.

Prior to the onset of any incident it is important to let the media outlets know where to arrive to get information and what the rules are for getting any information. This will assist in having the media report to one location under controllable circumstances.

Follow the practices of effective media communications which include timely, factual information such that there is no reason for misinterpretation of the facts or statements made. If information is not provided in a timely fashion, it is possible that the media will search for information from other sources, which may not be factually correct or applicable. Staff and faculty shall refer all media inquiries to the Incident Commander or the District Superintendent without releasing any information to the media. Staff and faculty shall instruct students to not speak with the media unless approved by Incident Command.

The Public Information Officer or Incident Commander will communicate based on the following recommended practices:

1. Above all, plan what will be said.
2. Before meeting with reporters, write down the most important points to be made.
3. Limit points to three.
4. Keep sentences short and words clear.
5. Practice.

Key phrases that can help organize

thoughts: "The important facts are..."

"What I can tell you is..."

"What we have done to ensure the safety of our staff and students is..." "We take this very seriously."

If you don't know the answer, say "I will get the information and get back to you. What is your deadline?"

The Public Information Officer or the school's representative must set the interview parameters.

Set the place and time.

Meet with the media in a controlled environment

COMMUNICATIONS TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Regular, clear communication between schools and families is essential. With current technologies and communications methods such as websites, school messenger and backpack letters are all effective methods of communicating essential information in a timely manner.

When a critical incident has occurred at school or has involved one or more students or staff members in a school, letters, written in conjunction with public safety officials, can be an effective way of relaying important and helpful information. Unlike verbal messages, letters can be reread and used as a reference tool. Reporters often use backpack letters to verify facts and, even more importantly, to demonstrate to the community that a school is taking care of its students and staff members. The information in backpack letters can form the outline for media interviews. Letters to parents and guardians, often sent home in students' backpacks, are a key communications tool between principals and parents. In a critical situation, a letter home gives a district the opportunity to:

6. Explain the situation that exists.
7. Describe the steps that the school has taken to ensure the safety of students and staff members.
8. List ways in which parents and family members can support their children.

Of utmost importance in every decision is the safety of students and staff.

The decision to send a backpack letter home after a critical incident is made on a case-by-case basis, usually by the incident commander in consultation with other administrators, such as the District Superintendent. Public safety and public health officials are involved in the decision to send a letter, when they are involved in the investigation or the resolution of an incident.

In making the decision to send a letter home, a series of questions are asked:

9. Are other children or adults endangered by this situation?
10. Are others likely to be at risk at a future time?
11. Are there actions that parents or guardians should take to further protect their children?
12. Are there harmful rumors in the school community that must be addressed?

Set the length of time to be allotted. It is courteous to ask the reporter if he or she is on deadline and to respect that deadline. The responsibilities to the students in must also be respected.

Set the topics. In a television interview, always ask the reporter before the camera is rolling what questions he or she will ask. Tell him or her what you feel free to talk about and what you cannot comment on. Reporters want to tape a good interview or write a good story. They will most likely work with you. You can conclude an interview politely but firmly if you can't negotiate the subject matter.

Have confidence when you engage in an interview. Be polite. Be forthcoming with all the information that you can. Educate the reporter. Show the reporter how the story can help support the mission of the schools (e.g., send a message to the community that schools take threats of violence seriously or send a message to parents that they must talk with their children about the dangers of abusing over-the-counter medications).

Before you start an interview, be sure you can get out gracefully:

"Thank you very much for coming."

"You can help us..."

When we have more information, we will..."

Sometimes, it is not appropriate to send a letter home immediately. Sometimes such a letter might inadvertently:

13. Promise a police or public health investigation.
14. Violate the privacy of individuals in the situation.
15. Create unwarranted anxiety.

WHAT SHOULD A BACKPACK LETTER SAY?

All well-constructed backpack letters should:

16. Be clear and simply written.
17. Avoid words or phrases that are inflammatory.
18. Contain only accurate information and do not speculate.
19. Involve parents in the solutions.

Often a backpack letter can be limited to three paragraphs.

28. The first paragraph outlines the situation.
29. The second paragraph details the steps the school has taken – along with other public safety and/or public health officials – to remedy the problem.
30. The third paragraph lists ways that families can help and how families can get more information.

HOW IS A BACKPACK LETTER PREPARED?

A draft of a backpack letter is prepared by the incident commander and first reviewed by the District Superintendent or designee. In all situations that involve police or fire and rescue investigations, public safety officials must also review the letter before it is sent home.

Draft letters should be e-mailed, faxed or delivered to the District Superintendent or designee. If appropriate they will send the letter to the appropriate public agency for review. While this process can be completed within an hour, if that is necessary to meet school dismissal times, every effort should be made to allow as much time as possible for the review process.

When disseminating letters or communications in an electronic manner consideration must be given to those that might not utilize electronic communications methods and as such written letters may still need to be sent even if electronic methods are also employed.