

WHITEHALL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022
DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN
PROJECT SAVE - Commissioner's Regulation 155.17
(Safe Schools Against Violence in Education)

Introduction

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. 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 the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The district-wide plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the building level. Districts stand at risk from a wide variety 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 each school district and its schools.

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

Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines

A. Purpose

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

B. Identification of School Teams

The Whitehall Central School District has created a District-Wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the board of education, teachers, administrators, parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel. The District has also created Building Level Emergency Response Teams.

The Board of Education has appointed the Superintendent, Patrick Dee, as the Chief Emergency Officer. The Chief Emergency Officer or their designee is responsible for coordinating communication between staff and law enforcement and first responders and for ensuring the staff's understanding of the district-level safety plan. The Chief Emergency Officer or their designee shall also be responsible for ensuring completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans.

C. Concept of Operations

- The District-Wide School Safety Plan is directly linked to the individual Building-Level Safety Plans for each school building. Protocols reflected in the District-Wide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of individual Building-level Safety Plans.
- In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the building-level safety team
- Upon the activation of the building-level safety team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified.
- Efforts may be supplemented by Washington County and New York State resources through existing protocols when needed and 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 school district to use certain facilities for sheltering during times of emergencies
 - A protocol exists for the use of county mental health resources during the post-incident response.

D. Plan review and public comment

- This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the Whitehall Central School District's District-Wide School Safety Team and reviewed on an annual basis on or before September 1 of each year. A copy of the plan will be available at the District Office located at 87 Buckley Drive, Whitehall, NY 12887 and on the school district's website.
- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(e)(3), the 2001-02 District-Wide School Safety Plan shall be made available for 30 days of public comment before being adopted by the Board of Education.
- Period (annual) updates have been made to the District Level Safety Plan since the original Plan was developed and approved. The most recent revisions reflect changes to Commissioner's Regulation 1555.17 which went into effect July 1st, 2016. A public hearing was held on to address the updates to the plan. This public hearing provided for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties in attendance.
- Full copies of the District-Wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) within 30 days of adoption and will be available on the Whitehall Central School District Website.
- While linked to the District-Wide School Safety Plan, 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. Original Building-level Emergency Response Plans and all updates are given to the New York State Police

and other pertinent parties within 30 days of adoption.

Section II: General Emergency Mitigation, Prevention, and Response Planning

The District-Wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for the Building-level Emergency Response Plan. The purpose of a uniform plan is to ensure district-wide continuity for emergency responses. These general emergency responses will be used to assist school employees, students, parents and emergency responders learn one system that can be used in either of the Whitehall school buildings. This is particularly beneficial as students move from elementary to high school, and as full-time, part-time and substitute employees travel between the schools.

The District's emergency preparedness also includes efforts to mitigation and prevention to decrease the likelihood of an emergency to reduce losses or damage should an emergency occur. Mitigation involves the identification of risks and vulnerabilities, an assessment of resources and facilities, identification of stakeholders, including knowledgeable and collaborative emergency responders and mental health resources, and the communication process. Preparedness includes ensuring policies and protocols are in place as well as the readiness and knowledge to respond. This involves clarifying team roles, having the incident command system (ICS) in place, continuous training on ICS and the plan procedures, and conducting exercises and drills. Response occurs when the plan is active and involves the actions necessary to contain and resolve a crisis. The ICS plan in place is activated as needed to promote effective decision-making. Consistent communication should be maintained with staff, students, family, and media. Actions should be documented and after-action briefings should be conducted to ensure that best practices are being maintained.

Identification of sites of potential emergency:

- The district-wide school safety team in conjunction with Washington County Emergency Management Office, New York State Police, and the Washington County Sheriff have contributed information that has identified areas outside of school property that may impact a district facility during an emergency. Factors that were considered include population, presence of hazardous materials, potential for emergency based on geographical potential and/or national trends and proximity to district property, such as airports, bridges, dams, and major intersections, primary routes of hazardous cartage and SARA Title III locations of hazardous materials. The detailed list is included in the confidential Building-Level Safety Plans and is reviewed on a regular basis.
 - The district team has recognized that there are many factors that could cause an emergency in our schools and facilities within the district. There are also factors that need to be considered when responding to an emergency. The detailed list of potential internal and external hazards or emergency situations is included in the confidential Building-Level Safety Plan.
- A.** The district has developed multi-hazard response plans specific to each building. These guidelines are included in the Building-Level Safety Plan and are in Incident Command System (ICS) format. Plans for taking the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate are, including but not limited to:

- Initial Actions
- Command Post Location (primary and secondary)
- School Cancellation
- Early Dismissal
- Evacuation (before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes)
- Evacuation/Relocation Sites (internal and external)
- Shelter in Place procedures
- Hold in Place procedures
- Lockdown procedures
- Lockout procedures
- Other emergency procedures

Emergency School Closing and Delays details for parents, students, faculty and staff is also posted on the district's website and is listed in the district calendar.

The district has identified various resources that may be available for use during an emergency, including the identification of personnel via school building teams and use of ICS, a list of volunteer faculty/staff trained in first aid and CPR, equipment, master list of all vehicles in the Transportation Department, building floor plans/maps with shut-offs and potential hazards noted, American Red Cross Sheltering Agreements and designated shelter sites with backup shelter sites. The district has agreements with any shelters that are used within the community. The specific, detailed information is included in the confidential Building-level Emergency Response Plans upon the advice of the New York State Police.

- B. Using Incident Command System (ICS), the district has identified the school personnel authorized to make decisions during an emergency. Through ICS the procedures to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies are clearly defined. ICS identified the staff members and their backups assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.

Each school building has an Emergency Response Team which works under the Incident Command System (ICS) The specific details of each buildings' Emergency Response Team are located in the confidential Building-level Emergency Response Plans. Each school building Emergency Response Team has been given an overview of the Incident Command System (ICS), an ICS flow chart, ICS training and specific ICS roles and responsibilities along with procedures to use during a drill, exercise and/or emergency.

- C. The district has developed policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students, including the strategies for implementing training related to multi-hazards. Procedures have been established to provide this training on an annual basis to include but not limited to: early dismissal/go home drill, fire drills, lockdown drills, table top exercises, New York State Police Safe Schools training, and Incident Command System training. Individual schools use various faculty/staff surveys and forms, in order to obtain feedback on the drill practiced. School administrators then address any concerns or questions noted and share them either in written form or in faculty/staff meetings. On a

monthly basis, the district administrators and principals meet to discuss all reports of multi-hazard training, actual and potential hazards and/or violence (implied threats, direct threats and/or actual acts of violence). The discussions are the key to debriefing as a district. Actions and procedures that are carried out well are verified and areas in need of improvement are noted as needed. This level of district awareness assists each principal and administrator in responding to future training, actual emergency responses and implied threat, direct threats and/or actual acts of violence.

D. The district conducts drills and other training 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. The district administrators and Building-level teams participate in tabletop exercises with local responders. The New York State Police have been instrumental in conducting tabletop exercises at the district and school building levels. They have provided valuable debriefing assistance in tabletops involving criminal offences and threats/acts of violence. A debriefing is conducted after each drill and/or exercise to determine if changes to the plan are necessary and to assist in returning to routine school activities. Schools that have multiple floor levels also prepare and practice a Non-Ambulatory Emergency Evacuation Plan. Furthermore, training exercises include:

- An annual review of the Building level emergency guides and general awareness training
- The annual early go-home drill to test evacuation and sheltering procedures
- Each school building conducts emergency drills throughout the school year in compliance with the SED schedule for the purpose of familiarizing staff and students with emergency procedures

Section III: Responding to Threats and Acts of Violence

- A. Schools will activate their Emergency Response Team and review and implement procedures using the Multi-hazard Response Guides found in the Building Level Emergency Response Plan. The Multi-hazard Response Guides are reviewed by the District and Building Level Teams to ensure content and consistency throughout the district. These policies and procedures are for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school. The following types of procedures are addressed in the confidential Building-level Emergency Response Plans:
- The use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation. (Training offered through the NYS Police Safe Schools Program on an annual basis.)
 - Informing the building principal of implied or direct threats.
 - Determining the level of threat with the Superintendent or designee.
 - Contacting appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
 - Monitoring the situation, adjusting the district's response as appropriate to include possible implementation of the Emergency Response Team.
 - Communication with parent/guardian.
- B. The Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Guides, located in the confidential Building-level Emergency Response Plans, provide guidance on the district's policies and procedures for responding to direct acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, including consideration of zero-tolerance policies for school violence. The following types of procedures are addressed in the plan:
- Inform the building principal and superintendent.
 - Determine the level of threat with principal and superintendent/designee.
 - If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
 - If necessary, initiate lockdown procedure and contact appropriate law enforcement agency.
 - Monitor the situation; adjust the level of response as appropriate; if necessary, initiate early dismissal, sheltering or evacuation procedures.

NOTE: The Whitehall "Code of Conduct" describes policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school.

- C. The following protocols for appropriate responses to emergencies are provided as examples of responses to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions and kidnappings:
- Identification of decision-makers.
 - Plans to safeguard students and staff.
 - Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary.
 - Procedures to notify parents.
 - Procedures to notify media.
 - Debriefing procedures.

- All district administrators, principals, their secretaries and building custodians have a “Whitehall Central Schools Emergency Reference Card.” This specifically outlines which agency and which administrator(s) need to be contacted under which emergency circumstances. This two-sided page is updated on an annual basis and designed to be kept near the phones at work and at home if needed during “off” hours.
- D. The district has established policies and procedures to contact parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal. In the Whitehall Central School District, the following communication methods will be taken:
- For small-scale incidents, school personnel will directly call the parents/guardians of all students directly impacted by any acts of violence. All other parents/guardians will receive an informational letter. The Crisis Intervention Plans and Post-Incident Response Team will be activated and available. If needed, meetings will be scheduled in a timely manner for further discussion.
 - For any major incident, the district will be working with the media (TV, radio, Times Union Source Line) to relay pertinent school related information (i.e. how and where parents can be reunited with children, etc.). Major emergencies can quickly tie up phone lines with incoming and outgoing calls and roads can be quickly blocked by the traffic of emergency vehicles, concerned parents and community members. School personnel will directly call the parents/guardians of all students directly impacted by any acts of violence. All other parents/guardians will receive an information letter. Community meetings and/or press conferences may be scheduled in a timely manner to discuss the particulars of the incidents and the district’s response. The District and/or Building Level Response Team(s) will implement the Crisis Intervention Plans or other response plans as needed.

Section IV: Communication with Others

The District-Wide School Safety Plan provides the framework for the Building-level Emergency Response Plan with regard to communication with others.

- A. The Whitehall Central Schools is fortunate to have substantial ties to the community. If there were to be an emergency within any one of our facilities, that facility would call 911 for emergency assistance. If involvement were needed from other local government agencies, then the Superintendent or designee would act as that contact person. Additional procedures for communications can be found in the Building-level Emergency Response Plans. The following examples are the types of arrangements that could be used by the district:
- Principal (Building-level IC or backup IC) or Superintendent (District-Wide IC or backup IC) in an emergency would contact the county dispatch center for fire, EMS, or police by calling 911.
 - Principal (Building-level IC or backup IC) or Superintendent (District-Wide IC or backup IC) contacts the highest-ranking local government official for notification and/or assistance.

- B. Arrangements for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials including the county or town officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law will be carried out. The following are examples of the types of arrangements that could be used by the district during countywide emergencies:
- Superintendent (District-Wide IC or backup IC) in an emergency will contact the Washington County 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: County Civil Defense Office, American Red Cross, County Emergency Services Office, New York State Police, Washington County Sheriff, Washington County Mental Health Office and Needham Risk Management.
 - If the emergency is within the school district boundaries and has the potential to impact the surrounding community, the Superintendent or designee will notify the appropriate town officials (Ex: Highway Dept., Town Administrator, and/or Public Safety). Likewise, should there be an emergency within the community that has the potential to impact the facilities of the school district, the Superintendent should be notified immediately.

Section V: Prevention and Intervention Strategies

- A. The district has developed policies and procedures related to school building security including, visitor sign-in and badge procedures, and employee badges. The New York State Police, Washington County Sheriff's Department or other law enforcement agencies may also conduct random locker searches. If a crime occurs in or on school property, the district has procedures and will follow the NY State Police 'Crime Scene Management' brochure which is in the confidential Building Level Emergency Response Plan .

To further enhance school security and student, faculty and staff safety, the district has the following policies in place; Child Safety and Conditional or Emergency Appointments (Policy 9128 and 9128-R), Suspected Child Abuse by District Personnel (Policy 9130) and the Drug-Free Workplace Act (Policy 9125). The District Code of Conduct also supports school safety and security.

- B. The Whitehall Central School District has implemented 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. The district employs school psychologists and intervention counselors who assist the district in identifying early warning signs in students and early intervention/prevention strategies. The intervention counselors play a key role in violence prevention and suicide prevention programs.

The district currently disseminates informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors through the individual schools with guidance and direction from the District Office. For example, the Superintendent of Schools gave each principal the Age-Related Reactions of Children to Disasters in response to the 9/11 terrorist events. In turn, each principal disseminated this information to faculty, staff and parents to provide information about children's normal

reactions within specific age groups and suggestions for enabling children to cope with disaster precipitated stress.

The district is in the process of expanding its dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors and early warning signs. Additional annual mechanisms will be dedicated to the dissemination of the warning signs to parents, faculty and staff, and will combine information from various sources such as:

- New York State Police, Safe Schools Awareness Program; *Behavioral Indicators to Watch For*, *Violent Behavior Indicators*, and *Children's Threats: When Are They Serious*
- Brochure from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Protect Your Child from Violence, A Resource for Parents; (*Warning Signs, Media Violence and Talking with Your Child*)
- ETR Associates, Bullying, The ABC's
- New York State Center for School Safety, Helping Potentially Violent Children, Identifying Troubled Children, and Preventing Bullying, A Manual For Schools And Communities
- American Psychological Association, Communication Tips For Parents and Warning Signs; Fight For Your Rights: Take a Stand Against Violence

C. Appropriate prevention and intervention strategies such as:

- Collaborative efforts with state and local law enforcement officials designed to ensure that personnel are adequately trained including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations
- Non-violent conflict resolution training programs
- Peer mediation programs
- Extended day school programs
- Community-wide Character Counts program

D. Strategies for improving communication among students, between students and staff and the reporting of potentially violent incidents. Highlights of the major programs are noted below:

- District-Wide Programs:
 - Character Counts Program.
 - "Commitment to Excellence" Whitehall's long range plan for quality education which includes the "Profile of a Whitehall Graduate".
 - District School Calendar containing the Code of Conduct is mailed to all students.
 - Each school has a student/parent handbook that outlines the expectations of students.
- Whitehall High School (6-12)
 - Respect Club; the goal of this club is to foster mutual respect in the high school. An ongoing effort to accomplish this goal has involved many clubs and leadership groups together in pursuit of the common goal to improve the quality of human interaction in the high school at every level.

- Mentoring Program; to improve school performance and/or social interactions. This program pairs a high school student with a 6th grader on a weekly basis for the school year.
- Moot Court; students attend county trials and the Law Day Program. Weekly meetings are held.
- Outdoor Adventure Club; students participate in indoor and outdoor activities to promote team building.
- Peace Program; Exchange program between Shen students and students in France.
- Youth Court/Peer Mediation; is a program designed to train student volunteers to perform the roles of judge, clerk, prosecutor, defender, foreperson and jury members in a peer sentencing court. Youth Court is sponsored in collaboration with the Washington County Prevention Council.
- World of Difference; The World of Difference Peer Training Program is designed to infuse the ideals of diversity within the school community.
- Key Club; organized to promote pride and service to school and community.
- Middle School Rights and Expectations; provided in written form in the Student Agenda.
- Words of Wisdom; Rights and Expectations reinforced daily by the 'Words of Wisdom' are read with the morning announcements. These are inspirational passages reflecting on the words of prominent people throughout history and applied to students' lives.
- Counseling Center; all Middle School students are assigned a school counselor who works with the students and parents during their time at the Middle School. Counselors discuss study/organizational skills, goal setting, interim/report card grades, strategies for improving grades/attitudes, learning styles, getting along with others and related topics that concern a student and/or parents.
- Child Study Team; Members (Principal, Assistant Principal, Psychologist, Intervention Counselor, School Counselors and School Nurse) meet weekly to discuss students who are referred by members of the committee or teachers. Specific interventions are developed and staff are assigned to monitor progress.
- Extracurricular Activities; There are extensive opportunities for students to become involved in productive, fun activities before and after school.
- Student Agenda; the 'What is Character' section of the student's agenda is provided for student reading and teacher use in school to help students learn the skills of making responsible choices and being proactive in facing

challenges. Teachers and parents use the Student Agenda as a communication tool between home and school. Teachers use the Student Agenda as a way of helping students learn how to manage time and work, and to be responsible for learning.

- Progressive Discipline Process; Teachers discuss behavior with students, communication with parents and use classroom behavior consequences. Teachers write referrals to document behavior that continues after teacher intervention. The student meets with the Assistance Principal or Principal to discuss the behavior and its consequences. This is communicated to parents by phone and in writing. Intervention may be sought through referral to STARRS or in-school counselors and the Child Study Team where possibility of Diversion or PINS may be discussed. Students may be assigned in school suspension, which is supervised by monitors, where students do schoolwork and may receive help from their teachers. Out of school suspension (up to 5 days) may be assigned by the Principal.
- Other Communication Strategies; Mentor Program with the High School, Respect Week, Student Assemblies (e.g. PTA Arts in Education, Safety Programs with NYS Police, Nancy Sharples Assemblies, Living Voices (Anne Frank) Assembly, Craft Project, Bowling and Rights & Expectation Assemblies).
- Elementary Schools (K-6) (various programs are offered at the elementary level):
 - Spiral Curriculum to Promote Non-Violence; cooperation, communication, tolerance, positive emotional expression, personal responsibility, creative problem solving.
 - Character Counts Moment: each day a student reads a message improving behavior positive ideas.
 - Character Counts Assemblies.
 - Comprehensive approach to work toward an atmosphere of tolerance across the school district.
 - Conflict Resolution.
 - Social Skill Training.
 - Drug Abuse Resistance Education.
 - Bully Prevention Program;
 - the Puppet People created 'Bully Busters' which carries the themes of Stand Up For Yourself, Stand Up For Others and when to Tell a Grown Up.
 - Students participate in lessons and activities about 'Cooperation, Assertiveness, Responsibility, Empathy and Self-Control (CARES)'. Staff and parents receive CARES information with a focus on the dynamics of bullying and teasing.
 - K-5 classroom lessons with counselor and psychologist.
 - Reporting system to report serious offense school violence.
 - K-2 I-Care Rules.

- Peacemaker Songs.
- Feelings: Counselor works with all students on the four basic feelings; happy, sad, mad, and scared.
- B.E.S.T. Program.
- Peace Pledge/Peace Tree.
- Assemblies; “Show of Love”, “On the Inside”.
- Conflict Escalator/Anger Thermometer.
- Problem Solving Strategies and “Stop and Think”.
- Kelso’s Choice.
- Rules for Fighting Fair.
- Pumsy in Pursuit of Excellence.
- D.A.R.E. Program.

E. The district has developed description of duties, hiring and screening process, and will require training of personnel. As required by the SAVE legislation, all new employees are fingerprinted and have a criminal background check via the NYS Education Department and the FBI.

F. Recovery: District Support for Buildings

- The district has elected to include in this plan, a description of how district resources will support the School Building-level Emergency Response Teams and the Post-Incident Response Teams in school(s) after threats of violence or actual violent incidents have occurred. The district realizes that some emergencies may be too much for an individual school building to manage on their own. If/when a School Building Emergency Response Team or Post-Incident Response Team is faced with threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the District-Wide Emergency Response Team will assist as follows:
 - Acting as a sounding board for the building principal/supervisor of implied or direct threats and/or violent acts.
 - Assisting in determining the level of threat and appropriate responses.
 - Sending a District-Wide Team member to support the building-level Emergency Response Team.
 - 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.
 - Assisting with offering a “backup” Post-Incident Response Team (another school team and/or an outside group) if the affected team needs assistance.
 - At monthly administrator’s meetings, all implied or direct threats and/or violent acts are shared and discussed. A consensus is reached on how to best handle each incident in a manner that meets district and building approval. All administrators have this ongoing resource available.

G. Recovery: Disaster Mental Health Services

The district has elected to include in this plan, a description of how the district office will assist in the coordination of Disaster Mental Health Resources in the affected school(s). The district understands that some emergencies may be too much for an individual Post-Incident Response Team to manage on their own. If/when a Post-Incident Response Team is faced with threats of violence or actual violent incidents, the District-Wide Emergency Response Team and District-Wide Post-Incident Response Team will assist as follows:

- Sending a District-Wide Team member to each affected school building as a liaison between the school building and the District Office.
- Activating the District-Wide Post-Incident Response Team. The team consists of the school physicians, school nurse coordinator and school psychologists and district office administrative staff as needed. The team may also activate local resources such as the Washington County Department of Health, Washington County Mental Health, and Washington County Emergency Management Office.
- Continued feedback from those directly impacted is sought. Building and district support is offered 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 incident.
- Assisting with parent/guardian, student, faculty/staff debriefing and/or post-incident crisis intervention. 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 with written guidance and resources. A letter always goes home to respective parents/guardians after incidents such as a physical altercations, bomb threats, suicide, etc., to help offer assistance, list warning signs so they can watch their child for any signs of stress/concern and to help dispel rumors. Each Post-Incident Response Team had district level support and guidance.
- 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 and Communications Office. The district has a large resource of letters, press releases and media procedures that take the burden off the individual school building team. Since such incidents may impact the entire district, either literally or psychologically, such communication needs to be processed and directed at the district level.

Appendices:

Appendix 1:

Listing of all school buildings covered by the District-Wide School Safety Plan with addresses of buildings and contact names and telephone numbers for buildings employees.

Appendix 2:

Summary of Building-Level Plan.

Appendix 3:

Internal resources of the Whitehall Central School District

Appendix 4:

The Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors – A Guide for Families and Communities

Appendix 5:

Pandemic Operations Plan

Appendix 6:

SPO Memorandum of Understanding

Appendix 1: List of all school buildings covered by the District

Whitehall CSD District Office

87 Buckley Road, Whitehall, NY 12887
Patrick Dee, Superintendent of Schools
518-499-1772

Whitehall Elementary School

99 Buckley Road, Whitehall, NY 12887
Judy Gould, Elementary School Principal
518-499-0330

Whitehall Junior/Senior High School

87 Buckley Road, Whitehall, NY 12887
John Godfrey, Jr/Sr. High School Principal
518-499-1770

Appendix 2 – Whitehall Central 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 Whitehall Central School District supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The Whitehall Central School District’s Building-level Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Whitehall Central School District Board of Education, the Principals of the Whitehall Central 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 or his/her 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

- This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by 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 this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The School Board may adopt the district-wide and building-level 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.

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; 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 school safety 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 includes 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: Listing of internal resources for the Whitehall Central School District

Vehicles:

The district has the following vehicles in case of emergency:

- 10, 65 passenger buses
- 4, 41 passenger buses
- 1, 30 passenger bus
- 5, 7 person minivans

Fuel Sources:

The district has a number of forms of fuel sources available for emergency use. For specific information consult building level plans

Food Services:

The district may be able to provides as many as 750 meals per day, depending on the time of year and food stock. Contact Jon Ott, Cafeteria Manager, for additional information at (518) 499-1770 x 2013

Communications:

The district has radios that have been distributed to key personnel in the buildings. For complete information refer to the building-level plan

Appendix 4 – The Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors – A Guide for Families and Communities

Early Warning Signs

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

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

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

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

- **Social withdrawal.** In some situations, gradual and eventually complete withdrawal from social contacts can be an important indicator of a troubled child. The withdrawal often stems from feelings of depression, rejection, persecution, unworthiness, and lack of confidence.
- **Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.** Research has shown that the majority of children who are isolated and appear to be friendless are not violent. In fact, these feelings are sometimes characteristic of children and youth who may be troubled, withdrawn, or have internal issues that hinder development of social affiliations. However, research also has shown that in some cases feelings of isolation and not having friends are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.
- **Excessive feelings of rejection.** In the process of growing up, and in the course of adolescent development, many young people experience emotionally painful rejection. Children who are troubled often are isolated from their mentally healthy peers. Their responses to rejection will depend on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing their emotional distress in negative ways-including violence. Some aggressive children who are rejected by non-aggressive peers seek out aggressive friends who, in turn, reinforce their violent tendencies.
- **Being a victim of violence.** Children who are victims of violence-including physical or sexual abuse-in the community, at school, or at home are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.

- **Feelings of being picked on and persecuted.** The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied, singled out for ridicule, and humiliated at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support in addressing these feelings, some children may vent them in inappropriate ways-including possible aggression or violence.
- **Low school interest and poor academic performance.** Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to consider whether there is a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits the child's capacity to learn. In some situations--such as when the low achiever feels frustrated, unworthy, chastised, and denigrated--acting out and aggressive behaviors may occur. It is important to assess the emotional and cognitive reasons for the academic performance change to determine the true nature of the problem.
- **Expression of violence in writings and drawings.** Children and youth often express their thoughts, feelings, desires, and intentions in their drawings and in stories, poetry, and other written expressive forms. Many children produce work about violent themes that for the most part is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence in writings and drawings that is directed at specific individuals (family members, peers, other adults) consistently over time, may signal emotional problems and the potential for violence. Because there is a real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, it is important to seek the guidance of a qualified professional--such as a school psychologist, counselor, or other mental health specialist--to determine its meaning.
- **Uncontrolled anger.** Everyone gets angry; anger is a natural emotion. However, anger that is expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior toward self or others.
- **Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors.** Children often engage in acts of shoving and mild aggression. However, some mildly aggressive behaviors such as constant hitting and bullying of others that occur early in children's lives, if left unattended, might later escalate into more serious behaviors.
- **History of discipline problems.** Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems both in school and at home may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These unmet needs may be manifested in acting out and aggressive behaviors. These problems may set the stage for the child to violate norms and rules, defy authority, disengage from school, and engage in aggressive behaviors with other children and adults.
- **Past history of violent and aggressive behavior.** Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Aggressive and violent acts may be directed toward other individuals, be expressed in cruelty to animals, or include fire setting. Youth who show an early pattern of antisocial behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk for future aggressive and antisocial behavior. Similarly, youth who engage in overt behaviors such as bullying, generalized aggression and defiance, and covert behaviors such as stealing, vandalism, lying, cheating, and fire setting also are at risk for more serious aggressive behavior. Research suggests that age of onset may be a key factor in interpreting early warning signs. For example, children who engage in aggression and drug abuse at an early age (before age 12) are more likely to show violence later on than are children who begin such behavior at an older age. In the presence of such signs it is important to review the child's history with behavioral experts and seek parents' observations and insights.

- **Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes.** All children have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and physical appearance--when coupled with other factors--may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different. Membership in hate groups or the willingness to victimize individuals with disabilities or health problems also should be treated as early warning signs.
- **Drug use and alcohol use.** Apart from being unhealthy behaviors, drug use and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes children and youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.
- **Affiliation with gangs.** Gangs that support anti-social values and behaviors--including extortion, intimidation, and acts of violence toward other students--cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are influenced by these groups--those who emulate and copy their behavior, as well as those who become affiliated with them--may adopt these values and act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations. Gang-related violence and turf battles are common occurrences tied to the use of drugs that often result in injury and/or death.
- **Inappropriate access to, possession and use of firearms.** Children and youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows that such youngsters also have a higher probability of becoming victims. Families can reduce inappropriate access and use by restricting, monitoring, and supervising children's access to firearms and other weapons. Children who have a history of aggression, impulsiveness, or other emotional problems should not have access to firearms and other weapons.
- **Serious threats of violence.** Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence. Recent incidents across the country clearly indicate that threats to commit violence against oneself or others should be taken very seriously. Steps must be taken to understand the nature of these threats and to prevent them from being carried out.

Identifying and Responding to Imminent Warning Signs

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

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

Imminent warning signs may include:

- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Severe destruction of property.
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of lethal violence.

- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

Threat Assessment

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

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

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

Personality Traits

Personality traits and behaviors that should be considered in assessing the likelihood of a student carrying out a threat include:

- a student intentionally or unintentionally revealing clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act;
- low tolerance of frustration, easily hurt, insulted, angered by real or perceived injustices;
- poor coping skills, demonstrating little ability to deal with frustration, criticism, disappointment, failure, rejection or humiliation;
- lack of resiliency, is unable to bounce back from frustrating and disappointing experiences; failed love relationship, cannot accept or comes to term with humiliation or rejection;
- injustice collector, nurses resentment over real or perceived injustices, will not forgive or forget those who s/he believes are responsible;
- depression manifested by lethargy, physical fatigue, morose or dark outlook on life, malaise, lack of interest in activities once enjoyed, unpredictable anger, generalized or excessive hatred to others, hopelessness about the future, psychomotor agitation, restlessness, inattention, sleep and eating disorders;
- narcissism, self-centered, lacking insight to the needs / feelings of others, blames others for failure and disappointment, may embrace the role of victim, display signs of paranoia, self-importance or grandiosity masking feelings of unworthiness, notably think or thin skinned;
- alienation, feels different or estranged from others, more than being a loner, involves feelings of isolation, sadness, loneliness, not belonging or fitting in;
- dehumanizes others, fails to see others as humans, sees them as objects to be thwarted;
- lacks empathy, demonstrates inability to understand feelings of others, may ridicule displays of emotion as weak or stupid;
- exaggerated sense of entitlement, has a sense of being superior and constantly expects special treatment and consideration;
- attitude of superiority, has a sense of being superior to others, smarter, more creative, talented, experienced, more worldly;

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

Family Dynamics

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

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

School Dynamics

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

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

Social Dynamics

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

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

Public Employer Health Emergency Plan for the Whitehall Central School District

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 Whitehall Teachers Association, Whitehall Staff Association 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.

--

As the authorized official of the Whitehall Central 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.

By: Patrick M. Dee

Signature: _____

Title: Superintendent of Schools

Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, 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 the Whitehall Central 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.

Situation Overview

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared a pandemic for the novel coronavirus which causes the COVID-19 severe acute respiratory syndrome. This plan has been developed in accordance with amended laws to support continued resilience for a continuation of the spread of this disease or for other infectious diseases which may emerge and cause a declaration of a public health emergency.

The health and safety of our employees and contractors is crucial to maintaining our mission essential operations. We encourage all employees and contractors to use [CDC Guidance for Keeping Workplaces, Schools, Homes, and Commercial Establishments Safe](#). The fundamentals of reducing the spread of infection include:

- Using hand sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water frequently, including:
 - After using the restroom
 - After returning from a public outing
 - After touching/disposing of garbage
 - After using public computers, touching public tables, and countertops, etc.
- Practice social distancing when possible
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately and go home
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue, the latter of which should be disposed of immediately
- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle, and end of each shift
- Other guidance which may be published by the CDC, the State Department of Health, or County health officials.

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 Schools of the Whitehall Central 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 of Schools.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees and contractors of the Whitehall Central School District may be notified by phone, email, or any other means determined to be necessary, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Parents, students, and other community members will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of email notifications, social media messaging, and local news outlets, amongst others. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The WSWHE BOCES Communication Specialist will support the Superintendent of Schools to maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of Schools of the Whitehall Central 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. Updates of this plan will be published on the District Website and posted conspicuously in all school buildings.

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Schools of the Whitehall Central 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, the Whitehall Central 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 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 the Whitehall Central School District

The Whitehall Central 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 the Whitehall Central School District have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	Provides hardware and software for staff and students 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 distance 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.
Buildings and Grounds	Continues to upkeep the campus during remote work and learning and ensures that all buildings and grounds are properly maintained, regularly cleaned, and disinfected as necessary to ensure the safety of school community members.
District Office	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.
Health Office	Upon consultation with the district physician and the County Department of Health, school nurses may be responsible for assessing ill staff and students, providing consultation to the district office, following up with healthcare providers, and providing assistance with contact tracing efforts as necessary.
School Building Main Office Staff	Oversight of mail, phones, sign-in procedures, and building utilization and operations.
Food Service	Ensure that food can be provided to students
Transportation	To ensure that meals/instructional packets may be delivered to students
Building Administrators	To maintain instructional operations of the District Pre-K -12 whether in-person or remote.

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. Assists building and district administrators by communicating with the local health department for guidance, may act as the liaison to the school physician, and is responsible for assisting other nurses in assessing ill students and staff

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Information Technology/Continuity of Operations and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Department Coordinator of Network and Technology services 	Responsible for overseeing the local area network and the subsequent ongoing maintenance of this network for the district. Oversees the district's internet access, phone systems, and district cell phone plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT microcomputer Repair Technician 	Responsible for providing support to teachers and students in regards to computer hardware and software. Will respond to "help desk" and troubleshooting concerns.
Buildings and Grounds	Director of Facilities 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for overseeing and providing direction to the B&G department and employees to ensure a safe working environment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Custodians Cleaners Maintenance Workers Groundskeeper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for routine cleaning, disinfecting, and maintenance tasks. Responsible for performing a wide variety of tasks related to the maintenance and upkeep of campus grounds, parking lots, and fields.
District Office	Superintendent of Schools	Responsible for making day-to-day decisions about educational programs, budget/spending, staff, and facilities. Responsible for helping the school district come in to and remain in compliance with all aspects of reopening plans, reopening activities, and guidance related to reopening. Responsible for helping the school district come in to and remain in compliance with all aspects of reopening plans, reopening activities, and guidance related to reopening.
	Business Administrator Account Clerk Payroll	Responsible for assisting the Superintendent in the administration of business affairs in such a way to provide the best services with the financial resources available. Ordering, receiving and deploying supplies and equipment, payments and payroll.
	School Nurse	Responsible for assessing ill students and staff and assisting in contact tracing efforts. May assist building and district administrators by communicating with the local health department

		for guidance, may act as the liaison to the school physician.
School Building Main Office Staff	School Secretaries	Responsible for answering phones, providing support to building administrators, responding to emails, greeting visitors, assisting in building sign-in procedures, accepting deliveries, and helping disseminate mail.
Food Service	Food Service Cook Manager	Responsible for overseeing the preparation of meals and coordinating with the Transportation Director to ensure that meals are disseminated.
	Food Service Employee	Responsible for the preparation of and making of meals for students.
Transportation	Head Bus Driver Drivers	Responsible for the safety and efficient operation and maintenance of the transportation department. Coordinates with the Food Service Manager on meal deliveries. Delivery of food and educational packets.
Building Administrators	Building Principals	Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the school community and supporting the academic success of students, promoting a positive school climate, and assisting educators.

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 and on public transportation

Remote Work Protocols

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

1. Identification of staff who will/can work remotely without impacting staffing considerations or instructional practices
2. Approval and assignment of remote work
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

Individual Remote work protocols shall be developed as necessary and facilitated through coordination with district administrators, building administrators, and the IT department to ensure that all needs are met and that safety, security, and functionality are at the forefront of any and all discussions

Approval and Assignment of Remote Work

The Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the Building Principals, Business Manager and other administrators and/or supervisors as needed, will review requests for remote work and corresponding work assignments to aid in the decision-making process. Final decisions will be communicated to the building/department administrators for dissemination to their respective staff. Superintendent of Schools and/or the School Business Manager will notify payroll of such decisions to ensure employee time and attendance is tracked accurately.

Equipping Staff and Students for Remote Learning

The school district shall work with their IT Manager to support non-essential employees and students during an extended school closure. In order to support this, students K-12 and instructional faculty and staff have been provided with Chromebooks to ease the transition to remote learning/working. Non-instructional staff who work remotely may have access to Chromebooks/laptops based on their individual needs for them to effectively perform their job duties remotely. In addition, the IT Department has established protocols for the repair of Chromebooks/laptops, as well as protocols for assisting in the procurement of internet access at an individual's home, if they do not have internet. The IT Department will also be responsible for assisting individuals in the procurement of VPN or other secure network drives as is deemed necessary and for providing access to software and databases that are deemed necessary for somebody to perform their duty.

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, Whitehall Central 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

For those "Essential Employees" the district may develop a staggered shift schedule to reduce the number of employees within the building at a given time. The supervisor for each labor title will develop a staggered schedule and submit to the Superintendent for review and approval.

Identification of Positions with Staggered Work Hours and Approval Process

District buildings and grounds staff may be assigned to staggered shifts to ensure coverage before, during, and after core business hours. Nurses and other building positions may also be realigned to ensure greater coverage during the day and to line up with the needs of our population.

The approval and assignment of changed work hours must be reviewed by the district's Administrators. Factors such as staffing levels, the ability to provide physical distancing, and ways to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness will be considered in the decision-making process.

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.

Identification of Personal Protective Equipment Based on Job Duties

Each building shall be provided with a supply of disposable masks and hand sanitizer for use by students, employees, contractors, and/or visitors, as necessary. *The Buildings and Grounds Account Clerk* shall be responsible for monitoring and replenishing those supplies as necessary. Individuals with a medical necessity and an approved reasonable accommodation will be provided N-95 respirators as necessary.

Given the nature of their work, buildings and grounds staff and health office staff will be supplied daily access to disposable masks, disposable gloves, face shields, and gowns as necessary. Individuals who have a job position that requires the wearing of an N-95 respirator shall be entered into a respiratory protection program, fit tested, medically cleared, and provided N-95 respirators as required.

Procurement of Personal Protective Equipment

The Buildings and Grounds Account Clerk shall track PPE inventory in their building in the form of an inventory report that will be submitted to the *Superintendent of Schools* for review each week. When inventory gets low (i.e., having less than two pieces of PPE for each essential employee for at least a six-month period), the *Buildings and Grounds Account Clerk* will notify the Business Manager who will contact one or more of the vendors on the District-approved supplier's list to procure the necessary PPE. The district maintains a supplier list with backup suppliers listed in an effort to mitigate any supply chain disruption. For unforeseen disruptions or shortages, the district shall work with the Washington County Department of Health for assistance. Personal protective equipment shall be stored within the buildings where they can be tracked and accessed in the event of an emergency, and maintained in a way that prevents degradation.

Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following CDC guidelines, we have established the following protocols:

- A. If employees or contractors are exposed to a known case of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency (defined as a 'close contact' with someone who is confirmed infected, which is a prolonged presence within six feet with that person):
 1. Potentially exposed employees or contractors who do not have symptoms should remain at home or in a comparable setting and practice social distancing for the lesser of 14 days or other current CDC/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question.
 - a. As possible, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill.
 - b. The Superintendent and Nurse are the designated individuals who must be notified and who are responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed

2. CDC guidelines for COVID-19, or a similar communicable disease, provide that critical essential employees may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them, other employees and contractors, and our constituency/public.
 - a. Additional precautions will include the requirement of the subject employee or contractor, as well as others working in their proximity, to wear appropriate PPE at all times to limit the potential of transmission.
 - b. In-person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.
 - c. Work areas in which the subject employee or contractor are present will be disinfected according to current CDC/public health protocol at least every hour, as practical. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 - d. If at any time they exhibit symptoms, refer to item B below.
 - e. The Supervisor in each labor group, in consultation with the Superintendent and Nurse, is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed

It's important to note that Item 2 above may not apply if the public employer is not considered critical infrastructure.

- B. If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 1. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms in the workplace should be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They should immediately be sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 2. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
 3. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation per CDC/public health guidance and have consulted with a healthcare provider.
 4. CDC criteria for COVID-19 provides that persons exhibiting symptoms may return to work if at least 24 hours have passed since the last instance of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. If the disease in question is other than COVID-19, CDC and other public guidance shall be referenced.
 5. The Superintendent and Nurse are the designated individuals who must be notified and who are responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed
- C. If an employee or contractor has tested positive for the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:
 1. Apply the steps identified in item B, above, as applicable.
 2. Areas occupied for prolonged periods of time by the subject employee or contractor will be closed off until disinfected.
 - a. CDC guidance for COVID-19 will be followed before cleaning, disinfecting, and reoccupation of those spaces will take place. If this time period is not possible, a period of as long as possible will be given. CDC/public health guidance for the disease in question will be followed.
 - b. Any common areas entered, surfaces touched, or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
 - c. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
 3. Identification of potential employee and contractor exposures will be conducted
 - a. If an employee or contractor is confirmed to have the disease in question, the on-site Supervisor will be required to notify the Superintendent, or their designee, who will then inform all contacts of

their possible exposure. Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- b. Apply the steps identified in item A, above, as applicable, for all potentially exposed personnel.
4. The Superintendent and Nurse are the designated individuals who must be notified and who are responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed

We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. We 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. The district's cleaners are responsible for cleaning common areas
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.

As information about the communicable disease becomes available,

Employee and Contractor Leave

Public health emergencies are filled with extenuating and unanticipated circumstances in which the Whitehall Central School District is committed to reducing the burden on our employees, contractors, and families. The Whitehall Central School District is committed to working with its community to ensure that our leave policies meet all local, state, and federal requirements and that additional provisions may be enacted upon need and the guidance and requirements put in place by local, state, and federal employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources as deemed necessary.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of the Whitehall Central School District, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the Whitehall Central School District, unless required by law.

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, off-site visits. This information may be used by the Whitehall Central School District to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

During a public health emergency, anyone who enters the building will be required to complete a daily attestation on their current health status. This process will be completed electronically through the “Raptor” screening process.

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 the Whitehall Central 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, the Whitehall Central School District will coordinate with the Washington County Department of Health and the Washington County Office of Public Safety to help identify and arrange for these housing needs.

Appendix 6: SPO Memorandum of Understanding

5. **The Duties of the SPO.** The SPO shall perform the following duties under this Agreement, as directed by the District and Sheriff's Office, to the extent permitted by law including Section 209-v:

- 5.1 The SPO shall undertake appropriate efforts to ensure the safety and security of District property and persons on such property. The SPO will patrol school buildings and grounds and respond to emergency situations on the District's property.
- 5.2 The SPO shall act as a school resource officer and provide a positive role model for students.
- 5.3 The SPO shall act as an instructor for specialized, short-term, programs at the District, when invited to do so by the principal or a member of the faculty (ie. Internet safety, conflict resolution, violence prevention etc.). All such presentations will be approved by both the District and Sheriff's Office.
- 5.4 The SPO shall make presentations to the District faculty and students on law- related topics. Such subjects shall include a basic presentation on laws, the role of police officers, and the police mission. All such presentations will be approved by both the District and Sheriff's Office.
- 5.5 The SPO shall coordinate his or her activities with the Superintendent of Schools and staff members as identified by the Superintendent, and will seek permission, advice and guidance prior to undertaking any program in the District.
- 5.6 The SPO shall promote a trusting relationship by developing lines of communication with students and staff and promote positive behavior and interaction between students.
- 5.7 The SPO shall make themselves available for conferences with students, parents and faculty members in order to assist them with law enforcement or crime prevention matters.
- 5.8 The SPO shall refer students who may be experiencing a variety of school, family or social problems to the District for appropriate action.
- 5.9 The SPO shall become familiar with all community agencies that offer assistance to youths and their families, such as mental health clinics, drug treatment centers, etc. but any referrals thereto will be made by the District.
- 5.10 The SPO shall assist the District in developing plans and strategies to prevent and/or minimize dangerous situations which may occur in school or during school sponsored events. The SPO shall assist in increasing staff awareness about policies and procedures for preventing/responding to incidents of violence and other threats to school safety.
- 5.11 The SPO shall take law enforcement action as immediately required to the extent that a special patrol officer may do so under the authority of law. As soon as practicable, the SPO shall make the Superintendent of Schools (or his designee) aware of such action. At the

Superintendent's (or his designee's) request, the SPO shall take appropriate law enforcement action against intruders and unwanted guests who may appear at the school and related school functions, to the extent that the SPO may do so under the authority of the law.

5.11(a) Once the SPO has taken whatever immediate action was necessary to resolve the situation the SPO shall notify and turn the case and investigation over to a Deputy Sheriff or appropriate Police Officer for any further action.

5.12 The SPO will assist other police officers and law enforcement representatives in matters regarding this Agreement, whenever necessary.

5.13 The SPO shall maintain detailed and accurate records of the operation of the SPO Program, and shall make them available to the Superintendent of Schools as required by law, or upon request.

5.14 The SPO shall not act as a school disciplinarian. However, if the Superintendent believes an incident involves a violation of the law, then the Superintendent may contact the SPO and the SPO shall then determine whether law enforcement action is appropriate and notify a Deputy or Police Officer for any further action. The SPO is not to be used as a substitute for regularly assigned lunchroom duties, hall monitoring, bus duties or other monitoring duties, but will maintain a highly visible presence through the school day in hallways, lobby, cafeteria, restrooms, and parking lot to protect persons and property, to maintain order, and to assure compliance with safety and security rules and protocol.