



**New York State Project SAVE  
District-Wide Safety Plan  
For  
Argyle Central School District  
2020-2021 School Year**

**Introduction**

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. New York State School Districts are required to develop a district-wide school safety plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The district-wide plan is responsive to the needs within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the building level. School 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 Warren-Washington-Saratoga-Hamilton-Essex BOCES, in coordination with the Argyle Central School District, supports the SAVE Legislation, and intends to facilitate the planning process. The Superintendent of Argyle Central School District encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

**Section I: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines**

**A. Purpose**

The Argyle Central School District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Argyle Central School District Board of Education, the Superintendent of the Argyle 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 Chief Emergency Officer and School Teams**

The Argyle Central School District designates the superintendent as the district chief emergency officer whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- Coordination of the communication between school staff, law enforcement and other first responders;
- Lead the efforts of the district-wide school safety team in the completion and yearly update of the district-wide school safety plan and the coordination of the district-wide plan with the building-level emergency response plans;
- Ensure staff understanding of the district-wide school safety plan;
- Ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans for each school building;

- Assist in the selection of security related technology and development of procedures for the use of such technology;
- Coordinate appropriate safety, security and emergency training for district and school staff, including required training in the emergency response plan;
- Ensure the conduct of required evacuation and lockdown drills in all district buildings as required by Education Law section 807; and
- Ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans by the dates designated by the commissioner.

**Identification of School Team**

The Argyle Central School District has a District Emergency Response Team appointed by the Board of Education, to meet the needs of the District during emergencies. The District team is responsible for emergencies at the district. The Argyle Central School District has opted for one unified team to handle emergencies at this K-12 Facility.

The members of this team by title are as follows:

- Representative of the School Board
- Superintendent
- Teacher
- Building Administrators
- Head of Buildings and Grounds
- District/School Security Personnel
- Representation from the bargaining Units
- School Nurse
- Local First Responder

**C. Concept of Operations**

- The District-Wide School Safety Plan shall be directly linked to the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans for Argyle Central School District. The protocols reflected in the District-Wide School Safety Plan will be used to guide the development and implementation of the individual Building-Level Emergency Response Plans.
- The development of the District-Wide Safety Plan was a collaborative effort involving members of the District Emergency Response Team, law enforcement officials, county emergency service coordinators, and the Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Services. The plan was further developed utilizing the guidelines provided the by the New York State Education Department.
- In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies will be the responsibility of the District Emergency Response Team. The Argyle Central School District consist of the following facilities:

Argyle Elementary School
Argyle Jr/High School
Argyle School Bus Garage

All information pertaining to an emergency or violent incident will be directed to either the Building Principal/Designee or the District Emergency Response Team.

- Upon the activation of the District Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be notified. When appropriate local emergency officials will also be notified by calling **911**.
- County and State resources through existing established protocols may supplement emergency response efforts.

#### **D. Plan Review and Public Comment**

- This plan shall be reviewed and maintained by the District Emergency Response Team on an annual basis. A copy of the plan is available in the Superintendent's office.
- When significant changes are made, pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17(e) (3), this plan will be made available for public comment 30 days prior to adoption. The district-wide and building-level plans may be adopted by the School Board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.
- While linked to the District-Wide School Safety Plan, the 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 district-wide school safety plan and any amendments are submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption by posting this public plan on the district's website. The building-level emergency response plan is submitted to the Washington County Sheriff's Department and NYS State Police within 30 days of adoption.

### **Section II: Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention**

#### **A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies**

##### ***Program Initiatives***

The Argyle Central School District has offered programs and activities for improving communications among students and staff in order to report potentially violent incidents, *such as*:

- Programs concerned with bullying and violence prevention
- Collaboration with the Washington County Office of Emergency Services
- Dignity For All Students Act (DASA) training
- Mandated Emergency Response, Violence Prevention and Mental Health Training.
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
- Collaborative arrangements with State and local law enforcement officials designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained, including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations and are effectively and fairly recruited.
- Nonviolent conflict resolution programs
- Peer mediation and restorative justice programs;
- Extended day and other school safety programs.

### ***Training, Drills, and Exercises***

The Argyle Central School 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. All drills required by the NYS Department of Education are satisfied annually. The district has established the following procedure(s) for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students:

- The District will submit certification to NYSED that all district and school staff have undergone annual training on the emergency response plan, and that the school safety training includes components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year will receive training within 30 days of hire. The District will certify that all school staff receives this training by September 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year, or within 30 days of hire, whichever is sooner.
- Full participation in the Annual Early Dismissal - Go Home Evacuation Drill.
- Full participation with an Annual Evacuation and Relocation Drill.
- Full participation with 4 Building Lockdown/Security Drills annually.
- The District conducts 8 Fire Alarm Activation and Evacuation Drills annually.
- The District conducts 4 School Bus Safety and Evacuation Drills annually.
- Emergency Response Team members will participate in simulated tabletop exercises annually to test the building-level safety plan components.
- The district has/will conduct drills and other training exercises to test components of the emergency response in coordination with the following agencies:
  - Washington Office of Emergency Services
  - Washington County Sheriff's Department
  - Argyle Fire Department
  - Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Service

Note: Directly following each test or drill a debriefing will be conducted to evaluate the exercises and determine if changes to the emergency response plan are necessary. Notes will be taken during exercises and the debriefing, which are used during the evaluation process.

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, county, and state emergency responders and preparedness officials.

A debriefing concludes each test to determine if changes to the plan are necessary. Fire and Emergency Drills.

The school district, at least once every school year, and where possible in cooperation with local county emergency preparedness plan officials, conducts one test of its emergency response procedures under its building-level emergency response plan, including sheltering, lock-down, or early dismissal, at a time not to occur more than 15 minutes earlier than the normal dismissal time.

### ***Implementation of School Security***

The Argyle Central School District has developed policies and procedures related to school building security, including the following:

- All visitors entering school buildings are directed to the Main Office to provide identification, and receive identification (printed lapel sticker). Anyone who is found in the building without identification is directed back to the Main Office to sign in.

- Digital video surveillance systems are installed in district facilities. Video surveillance capabilities will be reviewed and expanded as needed.
- Annual security audits are conducted by local law enforcement, local fire department officials, insurance companies and BOCES risk management personnel.
- Argyle CSD policy and procedures as related to emergency protocols are not available to the public.

**Note: Policies and procedures are continually being evaluated and shaped by real life experiences, such as bomb threats, forced entry in to the school building with vandalism and outburst of potentially violent behavior by students.**

***Vital Educational Agency Information***

The Argyle Central School District consists of one K-12 facility and the bus garage all housed on a central campus.

**B. Hazard Identification**

The identification of sites of potential emergencies is located in the *Maps & Diagrams* section of each Building-level Emergency Response Plan. The location of potential hazards, such as: chemical storage, propane & motor fuel storage, potential fire hazards, electrical hazards, playground equipment, etc. are documented on a building and facility diagram and stored on Rapid Responder Portal. Potential off-site hazards are identified in the County/Town Hazard Assessment in each of the plans.

**Section III: Response**

**A. Notification and Activation of Internal and External Communications**

- The district policies and procedures for contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident are located in the Building-level Emergency Response Plan. The plan identifies individuals who are authorized to initiate contact with local law enforcement agencies. All communications during an incident at the school will flow through the Incident Command Center. Emergency services will be requested through the 911 system.
- In the event of an emergency; staff, students and visitors will be contacted in one or more of the following manners:
 

✓ Telephone (land line and cellular)	✓ District Radio System
✓ Intercom	✓ Regional Repeater Base Station
✓ Runner with verbal message	✓ Email
✓ Automated Notification System	✓ Television/Radio
- The district has established guidelines for staff and students that in the event that they initially discover an emergency situation, or impending emergency, that they will notify the Building Principal and provide him/her with information on the nature of the event. In the event that the Principal cannot be reached, the District Emergency Response Team will be contacted.
- Procedures for School Cancellation/Early Dismissal and Community Notification protocol for contacting parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal are outlined in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. This includes using local media in some instances as well as an Automated

Notification System. Buildings may also use a phone tree with emergency contact information provided by student's parents/legal guardians.

- The Argyle Central School District is allowing for the temporary covering of vision panels in spaces that cannot maintain an "out of sight" location for a lockdown. The rooms have been examined for configuration and furniture layout. Temporary covering will only be permitted during emergencies and drills. The covering must be removed promptly after the conclusion of the event.
- The Argyle Central School District is allowing for the temporary barricading of doors in the event a room cannot be secured during a lockdown. The staff member in such space shall make every reasonable attempt to secure the space in accordance with applicable codes however, if this is not feasible barricading will be viewed as an acceptable option.

These emergency measures allow time for responding law enforcement to arrive on scene and neutralize the threat. If possible, law enforcement should be involved in the drills to help prepare students and staff for their interactions and release from lock-down by uniformed officers. However, law enforcement involvement is not required by legislative mandate. Other protective actions such as lock-out or shelter in place are emergency actions that are usually preceded by some degree of warning time and do not require the immediate response necessary for a lock-down. While the school should be well versed in their lockout and shelter in place protocols, lock-down is the only type of protective action that is specifically required by the statute.

## **B. Situational Responses**

The district has developed multi-hazard response plans. These guidelines are present in the Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. The emergencies addressed in the plan include: (but are not limited to):

- Initial Actions
- Command Post Location (primary and secondary)
- Shelter in Place: Used to shelter students/staff inside the school
- Severe Weather
- Bomb Threat
- HazMat Incident
- Hold-In Place: Limits student/staff movement while dealing with short term emergencies
- Evacuation: Used to evacuate students/staff from the school
  - Before, during and after school hours, including security during evacuation and evacuation routes
  - Evacuation/Relocation Sites (internal and external)
- Lockout: Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the
- Lockdown: Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.
- School Cancellation
- Early Dismissal

The guidelines provide basic instructions for responding to any given incidents, such as:

- Contacting emergency response agencies
- Moving occupants from an area of danger to an area of safety
- Assembling the emergency response team and implementing the incident command system
- Notifying school administrators and the District Emergency Response Team of the incident
- Community/parent notification
- Sheltering or student release procedures
- Aftermath and recovery

### ***Responding to Violence***

#### ***Implied or Direct Threats of Violence***

The Crisis Response and Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on the districts policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students (including to themselves), teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school. The following types of procedure(s) are addressed in the plan, and could be used by the district:

- Contacting parents, guardians, or persons in a parental relation to a student in the event of an implied or direct threat of violence by a student against themselves, including threat of suicide.
- The use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Informing the Building Principal of implied or direct threat.
- Determining the level of threat with the District Emergency Response Team.
- Contacting appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary.
- Monitoring the situation, adjusting the district's response as appropriate, including consideration of zero-tolerance policies for school violence, and include possible implementation of District Emergency Response Team.

#### ***Acts of Violence***

Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on the districts policies and procedures for responding to direct acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school. The following types of procedure(s) are addressed in the plan, and could be used by the district:

- Determine the level of threat with the District Emergency Response Team.
- If the situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate if appropriate.
- Inform the Building Principal and District Emergency Response Team.
- If necessary, initiate lockdown or lockout procedures 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 Argyle Central School District "Code of Conduct" describes policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school.**

#### ***Response Protocols***

The Incident Command System, Multi-Hazard Emergency Response Action Guidelines in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance on the district's policies and procedures for responding to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions and kidnapping. The following protocols are provided as examples:

- Identification of decision-makers (incident command team).
- Plans to safeguard students and staff.
- Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary.
- Procedures to notify parents.
- Procedures to notify media.
- Debriefing procedures.

***Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government***

A section on Emergency Communications in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides guidance for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local government agencies. The following examples are the types of arrangements that could be used by the district:

- The Superintendent or his or her designee in an emergency will contact the Regional Emergency Dispatch Center by calling 911. The dispatcher will determine the appropriate services needed by the school.
- The Superintendent or his or her designee contacts highest-ranking City and or Town officials to provide notification and/or request assistance.

***Procedures for Obtaining Advice and Assistance from Local Government Officials***

The district will utilize procedures outlined in Emergency Communications and the Incident Command System sections in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials including the county or city officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law. The types of procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local governments during countywide emergencies could include the following:

- Superintendent/Designee in an emergency will contact emergency management coordinator and/or the highest-ranking local government official for obtaining advice and assistance.
- The district has identified resources for an emergency from the following agencies: Washington County Office of Emergency Services, Adirondack Chapter of the American Red Cross, New York State Police, Washington County Public Health Department, Washington County Sheriff's Department, and Capital Region BOCES Health Safety Risk Management Services.

***District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency***

- A District & Building Resources and Supply Inventory is located in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan that identifies the district resources, which may be available during an emergency: such as available facilities, food/water supply, batteries, fire extinguishers, first aid supplies, district vehicles and buses.

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

- The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides a description of the district's procedures to coordinate the use of resources and personnel during emergencies. These sections include the identification of the officials authorized to make decisions and the staff members assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.

***Protective Action Options***

- The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan describes the following actions in response to an emergency where appropriate: school cancellation prior to the start of school, early dismissal, evacuation before, during and after school hours, and sheltering procedures.

#### **Section IV: Recovery**

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

#### **A. District Support for Buildings**

- The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan provides resources for supporting the Emergency Response Team and Post-Incident Response Team at Argyle Central School District. The District’s Incident Command System Plan identifies alternates to relieve team members, and interfaces with the Crisis Response Plan to provide team members the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment. Additionally, members of the Post-Incident Response Team will be provided with sufficient staffing to allow the rotation of personnel, and the opportunity to debrief and rehab in a controlled environment.

#### **B. Disaster Mental Health Services**

- The Administrative branch of the Post-Incident Response Team (Crisis Response Team) will work through the School Psychologist, Guidance Director, and School Nurse to coordinate disaster mental health resources through the County Mental Health Department, community resources, neighboring school districts, and other disaster mental health resources to fully support members of the crisis response team.
- A debriefing of the Post-Incident Response Team is an essential part of the recovery phase following an emergency incident. The debriefing will be used in part to evaluating the district’s plan for possible revisions.
- **References : While linked to the District-Wide School Safety Plan, References 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.**

**Reference 1:** The listing of all school buildings covered by the District-Wide School Safety Plan with addresses of building, and contact names and telephone numbers for building staff is located in each Building-Level Emergency Response Plan.

**Reference 2:** Included in each Building-Level Response Plan is a table identifying the local and state law enforcement organizations that have received copies of the Building-Level Response Plans.

Revised: July 1, 2016 per NYS Education Law Sections 2801-a and 807