



GATES CHILI CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Districtwide Safety Plan

2024-25

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Summary of Laws	4
SECTION 2: RISK REDUCTION/ PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.....	5
2.1 Prevention / Intervention Strategies.....	5
2.2 Training, Drills and Exercises	5
Training	5
Multi-Hazard Training.....	5
Drills and Exercises.....	6
Trauma-Informed	6
Parent/Guardian Notification.....	6
Full Scale Exercises	6
2.3 Implementation of School Security.....	6
Security Personnel and Monitors – Responsibilities and Authority.....	6
Visitor Access	7
Video Surveillance	7
Intrusion Detection.....	7
2.4 Vital Educational Agency Information	7
2.5 Early Detection and Violent Behaviors.....	7
2.6 Hazard Identification.....	8
2.7 School Resource Officers (SROs).....	8
2.8 Workplace violence prevention program.....	8
SECTION 3: PREPAREDNESS.....	9
3.1 Chief Emergency Officer.....	9
3.2 Districtwide School Safety Team	9
3.3 Emergency Operations Group	9
3.4 Superintendent’s Cabinet	9
3.5 Command Post	9
SECTION 4: GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES.....	10
4.1. Concept of Operations	10
4.2 Implementation of Incident Command System.....	10
4.3 Initial Response	10
4.4 Organization and Assignment of Responsibility.....	11
4.5 Direction, Control, and Coordination	11

Coordination with Responders.....	11
Use of Resources	11
4.6 Administration, Finance, and Logistics.....	11
Agreements and Contracts	11
4.7 Communications During Emergencies.....	11
4.8 Multi-Hazard Response.....	11
4.9 Emergency Notifications.....	12
4.10 Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats	12
4.11 Specific Response Protocols.....	13
4.12 Obtaining Advice and Assistance from the Local Government.....	13
4.13 District Resources Available During an Emergency	13
4.14 Functional Annexes	13
4.15 Crime Scene Management	13
4.16 Emergency Evacuation of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Individuals with Disabilities	13
4.17 Accounting for all Persons.....	14
4.18 Family Reunification Plans.....	14
4.19 Crisis Occurring Outside Normal School Hours.....	14
4.20 Procedures for Informing Other Educational Agencies of an Emergency.....	14
4.21 Procedures for Sheltering Students, Staff, and Visitors	14
4.22 Medical Emergencies and Mental Health.....	15
SECTION 5: RECOVERY	16
5.1 District Support for Buildings	16
5.2 Disaster Mental Health Services.....	16
5.3 Review and Debriefing.....	16
5.4 Post-Incident Response	16
5.5 Trauma and Grief Team (T.I.G.).....	17
5.6 Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).....	17
SECTION 6: BUILDING-LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS	18
6.1 Plan Development and Maintenance.....	18
6.2 Distribution of the Plan	18
6.3 Record of Distribution.....	18
SECTION 7: EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND EARLY DISMISSAL	19
7.1 District Closings	19
7.2 District Evacuation and Early Dismissal Procedures.....	20

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

School safety is the job of the entire school community. This effort requires leadership and coordination by school administration, and involvement and participation from all sectors of the school community. Planning, conducting drills, and participating in exercises with law enforcement, fire, emergency officials and other members of the school community ensures a comprehensive, unified approach to school emergency response planning. Building relationships and community engagement are vital to building a safer school community.

The purpose of the Districtwide Safety Plan and each school's Building Level Emergency Response Plans (BLERP) is to help school officials identify and respond to potential emergencies by assigning responsibilities and duties of the school employees, students, families, and community stakeholders. Emergency Response Plans provide parents/guardians and the community reassurance that the school has established guidelines and procedures to respond to threats and hazards efficiently and effectively. Individualized policies and procedures have been developed by the Gates Chili Central School District (GCCSD) based on potential circumstances and resources. Tools to manage an emergency include response procedures that are developed through threat assessments, safety audits, planning, and training.

The Districtwide Safety Plan is required by law to be posted on the district website and contains only basic safety information. Each individual school building in the GCCSD also has an independent Building Level Emergency Response Plan (BLERP) that contains information about school response team members, students and staff with special needs and any other information critical to each school building. BLERPs are not available to the public and are confidential. BLERPs are submitted to the New York State Police and local emergency responders (police and fire departments) as required by law, for review and approval.

1.2 SUMMARY OF LAWS

New York State Education law §2801-a (Project SAVE) and Commissioner's regulation 155.17 set standards for Districtwide Safety/Emergency Response Plans. Both laws set minimum requirements of a Districtwide Safety Plan and Building Level Emergency Response plans which include policies and procedures relating to responding to certain threats. These plans were designed to prevent or minimize the effects of emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of schools and school districts with local and county resources in the event of such emergencies.

SECTION 2: RISK REDUCTION/ PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

2.1 PREVENTION / INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The administration of the GCCSD believes that improved communication among students, parents/guardians, and school staff adds to the quality of life and sense of safety at all of our schools. Such communication allows for the reporting, intervention, and prevention of potentially violent incidents before they actually occur. The following is a brief list of programs and initiatives that are in place at some or all of the GCCSD schools that promote open communication and have a positive impact on the quality of life in our schools:

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Bullying Reporting Process
- Sources of Strength
- Anonymous 24-hour “Safe School Helpline” for reporting issues relative to school violence and safety
- School Resource Officer Program in cooperation with the Gates Police Dept.
- Trauma, Illness and Grief (TIG) Teams
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Incident Command System (ICS)
- Restorative Justice
- Updated Code of Conduct outlining all expected behavior and consequences for students, staff, parents and visitors
- TAP App school safety platform with an emergency app

2.2 TRAINING, DRILLS AND EXERCISES

Training

The district understands the importance of training. All school staff, students, and others deemed appropriate by the school receive training during the school year to better prepare them for an incident. The annual training reviews the Districtwide School Safety Plan and individual Building Level Emergency Response Plans to brief staff on their roles and communication procedures during an emergency. The district also submits certification to the NYSED that all district and school staff have undergone annual training components on violence prevention and mental health. New employees hired after the start of the school year receive training within 30 days of hire. All other school staff receive this training by September 15th of each school year.

Multi-Hazard Training

The district provides annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students. The components of this training are consistent districtwide. Staff training will be routinely conducted at the school level followed by drills with the entire school population. These drills will focus on our standard response actions to a potentially dangerous or threatening incidents.

The use of tabletop drills to accomplish or compliment this training will be considered when live drills are impractical or not sufficient to meet the training goals.

Drills and Exercises

The GCCSD follows all mandated guidelines regarding the number of drills and exercises that must be conducted during the school year. The number of drills and exercises are established by New York State. The current guidelines state that there must be four (4) Lockdown drills, eight (8) evacuation drills, and one (1) early release drill per school year. The District's Chief Emergency Officer will coordinate and conduct these drills in conjunction with the local police and emergency responders.

Trauma-Informed

All drills will utilize a trauma-informed, developmentally and aged-appropriate manner. Trauma-informed drills means avoiding tactics in training or drills that may introduce or activate trauma, such as use of props, actors, simulations, or other tactics intended to mimic a school shooting, incident of violence, or other emergency, or inclusion of developmentally or age-inappropriate content. Drills may inadvertently prompt a negative emotional or psychological response in staff or students because of previous exposure(s) to trauma.

- Drills will be announced during the school day for students and staff (except for evacuation drills).
- When drills are conducted, it will ALWAYS be announced that it is a DRILL and NOT AN EMERGENCY.
- Drills will occur after annual training in emergency procedures has been provided to students and staff.
- Drills will be completed on different dates, days of the week, and during different times of the school day.

Parent/Guardian Notification

Notice to parents and those within parental relations regarding drills must be made within one week before each drill.

Full-Scale Exercises

All full-scale exercises that the GCCSD participates in with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials must be held on non-school days when school activities such as athletics are not occurring on school grounds. Additionally, the full scale-exercise may not include students without written consent from parents of persons in parental relation.

2.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL SECURITY

Security Personnel and Monitors - Responsibilities and Authority

The district employs security personnel and hall monitors to assist the schools in dealing with all matters of security and safety issues. The principal role of these personnel is to safeguard the district's students, staff and visitors from harm; to deter, detect, respond to, and report infractions of the Code of Conduct and New York State Law; and to protect the district's assets from theft and damage. These personnel employed by the district are authorized to carry out this role consistently with the Policies and Regulations of the District, applicable New York State Law, and District training.

Visitor Access

School access is controlled during the regular school day by locking down the building and utilizing one point of entry and the buzzer/intercom/camera to screen visitors prior to entrance into the building. Consistent with GCCSD Board Policy and Code of Conduct, an approved visitor to a school will present valid government issued photo identification and be given a pass prior to gaining access to the building. All District employees are required to wear identification at all times.

Video Surveillance

All District school buildings provide video surveillance to enhance the safety of our students and staff. The cameras may/may not be actively monitored, but the recordings are available for district officials and local law enforcement use.

Intrusion Detection

The district's buildings are protected by an intrusion detection alarm system that is linked to a central monitoring station.

2.4 VITAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY INFORMATION

The GCCSD maintains certain information about each school building within the district including, but not limited to school populations, transportation need and emergency telephone numbers of key personnel. In addition, similar information on other district departments as well as the assistance that those departments could provide in the event of an emergency is also maintained at the district level. A list of data and contacts will be updated and made available to key personnel (including all Principals) but is not available to the general public.

2.5 EARLY DETECTION AND VIOLENT BEHAVIORS

The district acknowledges the importance of early recognition and intervention into conflicts and potentially violent behaviors.

- The district will ensure that appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training will be incorporated into teacher conference days and be provided to all staff during regularly scheduled staff training sessions. All threats of violence are taken seriously and investigated.
- The district recognizes that despite our best efforts, students and parents may need additional assistance to respond to bullying. To ensure a quick response to parent and student concerns, the district has developed a bullying reporting process. Each Gates school has identified a DASA coordinator responsible for this function.
- Students and staff are encouraged to share information regarding any conflicts or potentially violent behaviors with an administrator (and law enforcement when appropriate) so an investigation can commence. The district has established an anonymous 24-hour "Safe School Helpline" to provide another means for such information to be brought to the attention of those who need to know so that the situation can be addressed in a timely manner.
- The district has developed policies and procedures for contacting parents, guardians or people 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.

- All staff members are trained in GCCSD procedures of reporting threats of violence and threats of suicide annually.

2.6 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

The list of sites of potential emergencies include all school buildings, playground areas, properties adjacent to schools, on and off-site athletic fields, buses and off-site field trip locations. These hazards (and how to handle each issue) will be documented in each BLERP.

2.7 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS (SROs)

In the event that the GCCSD has contracted with a police agency to provide a School Resource Officer (SRO) guidelines have been established to follow NYS mandates regarding school discipline. New Regulations state that every school shall define the roles and areas of responsibility of school personnel, security personnel and law enforcement in response to student misconduct. School discipline in the GCCSD is delegated to each building Principal. Investigations involving possible infractions of the District's Code of Conduct and the imposition of discipline thereunder are the responsibility of the school's administration. While the SRO may act as a resource to a school administrator during an investigation, the SRO may not directly question students or assign discipline. General guidelines for discipline are contained in the Code of Conduct. The roles of the SRO will be listed in the contract with the law enforcement agency (either Monroe County Sheriff's or Gates Police).

Per NYS Education Department Guideline 155.17 a new guideline established in 2019 states that the Gates Central School District will have an MOU with the Police Department stating that the Police Department delegates school discipline to the GCCSD. This MOU will be contained in the School Resource Officer Agreement.

School officials may conduct searches of students' property and person as permitted by New York State Law. The SRO should not become involved in administrative searches unless specifically requested by the school to provide security, protection, or for the handling of contraband. Administrative searches must be at the direction and control of the school principal. At no time shall the SRO request that an administrative search be conducted for law enforcement purposes or have school staff act as his/her agent.

2.8 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

On June 7, 2006, New York State enacted legislation creating a new Section 27-b of State Labor Law that requires every public employer to evaluate the risk of workplace assaults and homicides at its workplace(s) and to develop and implement programs to prevent and minimize the hazard of workplace violence to public employees. In 2009, NYS Department of Labor (DOL) implemented regulations to accompany the Workplace Violence Prevention Law. These regulations can be found at 12 NYCRR 800.6 and are enforced by NYSDOL. Effective January 4, 2024, all public schools & BOCES previously exempt under Section 2801 of the Education Law must comply with 12 NYCRR Part 800.6.

GCCSD complies with all regulations regarding this new requirement. The GCCSD Workplace Violence Prevention Program is made available to all employees and is posted on the Staff Intranet. Additionally, the necessary forms to report an incident are also located on the Staff Intranet.

SECTION 3: PREPAREDNESS

3.1 CHIEF EMERGENCY OFFICER

Each school year, the GCCSD appoints a Chief Emergency Officer. The designated Chief Emergency Officer is responsible for:

- Lead the efforts of the districtwide school safety team in the completion and yearly update of the Districtwide School Safety plan and the coordination of the districtwide plan with the BLERPs.
- Ensure staff understanding of the Districtwide School Safety Plan.
- Ensure the completion and yearly update of BLERPs 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 completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response Plans by the dates designated by the commissioner.

3.2 DISTRICTWIDE SCHOOL SAFETY TEAM

The Districtwide School Safety Team is appointed by the Board of Education each school year. It may include, but is not limited to, representatives of school board, teachers, administrators, law enforcement, local emergency responders, parents, student(s), school safety personnel. The Districtwide School Safety Team is responsible for addressing safety issues within the district and developing and updating Districtwide School Safety Plan on a yearly basis.

3.3 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS GROUP

During an emergency, the Emergency Operations Group shall function under the command of the Superintendent of Schools and the District's Chief Emergency Officer. The District's Chief Emergency Officer will be designated at a Board of Education meeting annually.

3.4 SUPERINTENDENT'S CABINET

The Superintendent's Cabinet includes all Assistant Superintendents, Director of PPS and Athletic Director. This group may be activated to provide assistance to any building in need.

3.5 COMMAND POST

During an emergency, the Superintendent of Schools or their designee may activate the Emergency Operations Group when necessary, and they will meet at a designated location. In addition to the Emergency Operations Group, the Superintendent may summon the Cabinet members and resources to report to this location. This designated location will be referred to as the Command Post although the exact location may vary depending on the type and extent of the event.

SECTION 4: GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

GENERAL RESPONSE ACTIONS FOR EMERGENCIES

Subsequent sections of this Districtwide School Safety Plan outline specific response actions for individual emergency situations. If an emergency situation occurs at the building-level, it is the responsibility of each and every District employee to take those actions which are geared toward preserving the health and safety of all students, staff and visitors. Specific detailed responses are listed in each individual BLERPs.

4.1. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The overall strategy of the Districtwide School Safety Plan and BLERPs is to execute effective and timely decisions and actions that prevent harm, protect lives and property, mitigate damages, restore order and aid recovery. These plans are based upon the concept that the incident management functions that must be performed by the school staff generally parallel some of their daily routine functions. To the extent possible, the same personnel and material resources used for daily activities will be employed during incidents. Because personnel and equipment resources are limited, some routine functions that do not contribute directly to the incident may be suspended. The personnel, equipment, and supplies that would typically be required from those routine functions will be redirected to accomplish assigned incident management tasks.

4.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all incidents and major planned events/drills. In general, the initial Incident Commander at the school will be the building Principal and will be the delegated authority to direct all incident activities within the school's jurisdiction. The Incident Commander will establish an Incident Command Post (ICP) and provide an assessment of the situation to the emergency responders, identify incident management resources required, and direct the on-scene incident management activities from the ICP. If no Incident Commander is present at the onset of the incident, the most qualified individual will assume command until relieved by a more qualified Incident Commander. NYCRR Section 155.17 requires a definition of a chain of command consistent with the Incident Command System.

4.3 INITIAL RESPONSE

School personnel are likely to be the first on the scene of an incident in a school setting. Staff and faculty are expected to respond as appropriate and notify the principal, or designee until command is transferred to someone more qualified and/or to an emergency response agency with legal authority to assume responsibility (Police, Fire or EMS dependent upon the nature of the incident). Staff will seek guidance and direction from the district and emergency responders. Any staff person or faculty in a building that sees or is aware of an emergency shall activate the BLERP.

4.4 ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

If the Incident Commander is not able to manage all of the aspects associated with an incident without assistance. The school relies on other key school personnel to perform tasks that will ensure the safety of students and staff during a crisis or incident. The Incident Command System (ICS) uses a team approach to manage incidents. It is difficult to form a team while a crisis or incident is unfolding. Roles should be Page 11 of 19 pre-assigned based on training and qualifications. Each staff member and volunteer must be familiar with his or her role and responsibilities before an incident occurs. The Building-Level Emergency Response Team will be used to delegate these tasks.

4.5 DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND COORDINATION

Coordination with Responders

The BLERP may have a set of interagency agreements with various agencies to aid in timely communication. Agreements with these agencies and services (including, but not limited to, mental health, law enforcement and fire departments) could help coordinate services between the agencies and the school. The agreements could specify the type of communication and services provided by one agency to another. In the event of an incident involving outside agencies, a transfer of command from the school Incident Commander to a responding agency will occur.

Use of Resources

The school will use its own resources and equipment to respond to incidents until emergency responders arrive. It will be the responsibility of the Emergency Operations Group and the Superintendent's Cabinet to help secure these resources.

4.6 ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, AND LOGISTICS

Agreements and Contracts

If school resources prove to be inadequate during an incident, the school will request assistance from local emergency agencies, other agencies and industry in accordance with existing Memoranda of Understanding. Such assistance includes equipment, supplies and/or personnel. All agreements are only entered into by authorized District officials. This is a function of the GCCSD Chief Financial Officer.

4.7 COMMUNICATIONS DURING EMERGENCIES

The school will contact and maintain communications with parents, the media and emergency responders during an incident. The School Incident Commander or Chief Emergency Officer will work with the District's Communications personnel and emergency responders to coordinate the release of information to ensure that information is consistent, accurate and timely. Communication procedures are detailed further in the BLERPs.

4.8 MULTI-HAZARD RESPONSE

There are many variables that could impact the manner in which the Building-Level Emergency Response Team responds to a particular occurrence. These variables could include but are not limited to time of year, time of day, weather, age of student(s) involved, location of student(s), anticipated delay from emergency responders, availability of support personnel and availability

of transportation. Therefore, it would not be practical to try and map out the steps to take for every conceivable scenario. It is more practical to focus on just a few critical decisions that need to be made in every emergency pursuant to our primary goal of preventing the loss of life and injury of students and school staff.

The building principal or their designee is designated as the Incident Commander of their school during a crisis situation until relieved by a higher authority. The principal or designee will provide leadership, organize activities and disseminate information with the assistance of the District's Emergency Operations Group or Chief Emergency Officer.

In most instances where this level of school response is warranted, the school will be seeking assistance from other emergency responders in resolving the situation. As such, the immediate objective is generally to contain the incident and successfully manage it until the emergency personnel arrive.

4.9 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

Notification of significant events or events that required a call to 911 shall be made to the Gates Chili CSD Chief Emergency Officer. These notifications shall occur at the earliest and safest possible time during the response phase. One of the possible options will be to activate the Emergency Operations Group and the Superintendent's Cabinet. The goal of the Emergency Operations Group and the superintendent's cabinet is to provide assistance and resources as needed to deal with the crisis at hand.

4.10 RESPONSES TO ACTS OF VIOLENCE: IMPLIED OR DIRECT THREATS

Having acknowledged that the recognition and early intervention into potentially violent situations is critical, it shall be the policy of the district to deal with all threats and potentially threatening situations and circumstances in a serious and deliberate manner. In addition to reporting and investigating direct threats, all staff are responsible for relaying to their respective school administration information about any student behaviors or communications that suggest a threatening situation is possible.

Depending on the imminent nature of the threat, the following procedures may be used by the district:

- Use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation.
- Inform the building Principal or designee of implied or direct threat or troubling behaviors or communications.
- Contact 9-1-1 if the threat may be imminent or for their advice and assistance. Direct threats to personal safety may well constitute a violation of law and the student making the threat can be prosecuted. Prosecution in Criminal or Family Court provides another opportunity for intervention.
- The building Principal or designee may initiate a threat assessment inquiry to attempt to determine the level of threat.
- If time permits, this inquiry will also involve interviewing potential witnesses as well as the parties involved. Some factors to consider when evaluating the level of threat include, but are not limited to, specificity of threat to a person or persons, mention of specific means or weapons, specific reason or justification, history of student, known access to weapons and propensity for violence.

- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate, and include the possible use of the counseling staff.
- Follow up with the appropriate procedures as outlined in the District's Code of Conduct.

4.11 SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

The district has established appropriate response actions to a variety of emergency situations. They are detailed in each BLERP as recommended by the NYSED Safe Schools Template. Transportation safety procedures are also in place.

4.12 OBTAINING ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In the event of an emergency where additional advice, assistance, or assets not readily available to the district are needed, the superintendent of schools will activate the Emergency Operations Group and the superintendent's cabinet to help provide needed assistance. The GCCSD is partnered with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and the Gates Police Dept. for these specific circumstances.

4.13 DISTRICT RESOURCES AVAILABLE DURING AN EMERGENCY

The district has identified district-based resources, which may be available during an emergency. These resources are available through the Emergency Operations Group and the Superintendent's Cabinet.

4.14 FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES

Functional Annexes focus on the critical operational functions and the courses of action developed to carry them out. In New York State, to ensure consistency, schools are provided with standardized definitions. These annexes are defined in detail in the BLERPs and quick reference guides. Other Annexes available and listed in this section are Crime Scene Management, Communications, Accounting for all persons, Continuity of Operations, and Recovery. The Medical Emergency Annex has its own section of the Districtwide Safety Plan.

4.15 CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT

Evidence is critical to the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. Therefore, only trained professionals should do the collection and preservation of evidence. Before those professionals arrive, it is important that the crime scene remain as uncontaminated as possible. There are things that can be done by people who arrive at the scene first to help protect the evidence. These procedures are outlined in the BLERPs.

4.16 EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF NON-AMBULATORY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Each building Principal is responsible for identifying non-ambulatory disabled staff or students and listing that information in their BLERP. This includes assigning an area of rescue assistance for such person on floors above or below the level of discharge. Since BLERPs are provided to local emergency responders, this information will be readily available during an emergency.

4.17 ACCOUNTING FOR ALL PERSONS

The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan has procedures in place to:

- Take attendance and report to the Incident Commander when class relocates inside the building, or an evacuation takes place.
- Report to the Incident Commander when a student, staff member, or guest cannot be located.
- Dismiss students if they have been relocated in the building.

4.18 FAMILY REUNIFICATION PLANS

During any building evacuation it is important to have a family reunification plan. In general, families should be reunified at each building's evacuation site and will require assigned personnel and plans that should be detailed in each BLERP.

4.19 CRISIS OCCURRING OUTSIDE NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS

Due to the many uncertainties about building occupancy during those times when school is not in session, it is difficult to prescribe a specific course of action that will remedy any and all crises occurring within that time frame. The building Principal will notify the Chief Emergency Officer of the Crisis and the appropriate actions will be taken.

4.20 PROCEDURES FOR INFORMING OTHER EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES OF AN EMERGENCY

1. The Chief Emergency Officer or Superintendent of Schools will evaluate the impact of an emergency on other educational agencies within the district.
2. If the impact is evident, the Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent will telephone the contact person at each affected educational agency and inform them of the status of the emergency.
3. If contact with other educational agencies cannot be made, the Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent will contact the Monroe County Sheriff's Office or Gates Police Dept. for assistance in communicating information to these educational facilities.
4. If transportation, sheltering and other types of assistance are to be provided to other educational agencies, the Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent will make arrangements to implement this assistance.

4.21 PROCEDURES FOR SHELTERING STUDENTS, STAFF, AND VISITORS

In the event that it becomes necessary to shelter students, staff, visitors, or other individuals, the building Principal or their designee will contact the Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent (via cell phone). The Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent. If it becomes apparent that students will not be able to leave the facility, the school Principal will make arrangements for adequate supervision of the students under their direction and to make provisions for building maintenance (custodial) and food services. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief Emergency Officer/Superintendent to inform appropriate police, Red Cross, and emergency preparedness officials.

4.22 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND MENTAL HEALTH

A medical emergency is a result of a minor or major illness, or injury to an individual, and can be of such severity as to be life threatening, or merely cause the victim discomfort or pain. The district does not expect unlicensed staff to provide medical care. The district does expect unlicensed staff to call for emergency assistance (e.g., 9-1-1, school nurse) and stay with the victim until help arrives. In each case, the guiding principles are to provide appropriate care until competent medical or parental care is secured. Emergency care is not authorized beyond proper first aid. First aid is treatment that will attempt to protect the life and comfort of the victim until authorized medical treatment is available, or in the case of a student, until the child is placed under the care of the parent or guardian. Staff should use judicious avoidance and standard precautions in managing all emergencies. School nurses follow their standard district policies, procedures and training not listed in this section.

The number of medical emergencies that can develop is potentially endless. Each BLERP will designate Building-Level Response Teams that may be used to respond in a medical emergency.

GCCSD has also developed policy and procedures for 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.

SECTION 5: RECOVERY

5.1 DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR BUILDINGS

In addition to support during an emergency, the district will use all resources at its disposal to support the Emergency Operations Group, Emergency Response Teams and the Post-Incident Response Teams in the affected school(s) after the incident has been resolved to the point where recovery of normal operations can commence. Additional support includes but is not limited to mental health services, building security and facility restoration.

5.2 DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In addition to District Services mental health services, District office staff will assist in the coordination of Disaster Mental Health Resources, in support of the Post-Incident Response Teams, in the affected school(s). This may take the form of seeking out additional local support or could, if warranted, involve accessing federal and state mental health resources as well.

5.3 REVIEW AND DEBRIEFING

The involved school's Building Emergency Response Team will meet to review the specific incident to determine if the school's BLERP was adhered to and if any improvements are needed to enhance the plan. This review may, depending on the nature and degree of the incident, include input from the Emergency Operations Group and/or representatives of local emergency response agencies. The review and debriefing may include the items summarized in the next section describing the Post-Incident Response Guide.

5.4 POST-INCIDENT RESPONSE

The district has a "Responding to Tragedy and Crisis" Plan. The Emergency Operations Group, Superintendents Cabinet, Trauma and Grief Team and the Building-Level Post-Incident Response Team will have the responsibility of assisting the school community and guiding staff and administration in coping with the aftermath of a serious violent incident or emergency. It is likely, however, that these duties and responsibilities will be shared by members of the TIG Team, Building-Level Emergency Response Team, and the remainder of the school community.

- Convene at the earliest possible time following the crisis for a meeting to help the principal prepare a written statement for the staff to be presented at the emergency staff meeting. It may be most prudent to convene on the weekend in some crisis situations to effectively manage communications to staff and parents and to initiate the proper support services as needed.
- Review roles in providing support during the day of the critical incident.
- Attend end-of-school debriefing meeting for staff. Prepare to offer any support in ways needed.
- Meet with Principal, following staff debriefing, if possible, to process the day's events and prepare for the next school day.
- Meet daily, for as many days as necessary, to process events and decide measures needed to meet the needs of students, staff, family, and community.

- Solicit and encourage feedback from students, staff, family and community. Feedback will be recorded on the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan feedback form for evaluation purposes.
- Meet after the passage of two to three weeks to evaluate and possibly revise plan based on students, staff, family, and community feedback.

5.5 TRAUMA AND GRIEF TEAM (T.I.G.)

The District TIG team is a group of counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses and other staff members who have received specialized training in responding to the emotional needs of children, teachers, and other school personnel, which arise from trauma, violence, illness, grief and loss. The TIG team will oversee the initial and on-going training program for all building crisis teams and maintain records. The TIG team is also responsible for coordinating District crisis team activities.

5.6 CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)

As part of the COOP, the District will use resources to:

- Identify primary and secondary relocation sites for each building that meet the needs of the school.
- Allow the COOP to be activated at any time and sustaining it for up to 30 days.
- Re-establishing essential functions, such as restoration of school operations, and maintaining the safety and well-being of students and the learning environment.
- Ensuring students receive applicable related services in the event of a prolonged closure.
- Protect vital documents and make them available at alternate sites.
- Identify personnel to assist in developing COOP and training them.

SECTION 6: BUILDING-LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

6.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Each Gates Central School District Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be developed by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team under the direction of the Chief Emergency Officer. NYCRR Section 155.17 requires that each school shall have a Building-Level Emergency Response Team that consists of representatives from the following groups: teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel, community members, local law enforcement officials, local ambulance or other emergency response agencies, and any other representatives the board of education, chancellor or other governing body deems appropriate.

A Building-Level Response Team and Post Incident Response team will also be appointed. The Building-level Emergency Response Team is responsible for the overall development, maintenance, and revision of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan (BLERP) and for coordinating training and exercising the BLERP. Team members are expected to work closely together to make recommendations for revising and enhancing the plan.

6.2 DISTRIBUTION OF THE PLAN

NYCRR Section 155.17 mandates that a copy of the BLERP and any amendments shall be filed with the appropriate local law enforcement agency and with the New York State Police within thirty days of adoption. This function will be completed by the building Principal or the Chief Emergency Officer.

Send Building-Level Safety Plans to:

New York State Police Headquarters – Field Command
Attn: Safe Schools NY
1220 Washington Avenue, Building 22
Albany, NY 12226

Or by email to:
info@safeschools.ny.gov

6.3 RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

Copies of the BLERPs, including appendices and annexes are recommended to be distributed to your School Building-Level Emergency Response Team, local fire department, area law enforcement (including village, town, county and state police), local and county emergency management, the District Superintendent and any other persons deemed appropriate by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team.

SECTION 7: EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND EARLY DISMISSAL

7.1 DISTRICT CLOSINGS

The decision to close school is based on the nature of the emergency and the expected impact that the emergency will have on student safety and welfare. Most often, school closings are the result of inclement weather conditions that adversely affect the safety of student walkers and/or bus riders. The district may close all of its schools or only one of its schools, depending upon the specific nature of the emergency. It may also elect a late starting time or an early dismissal, depending on an up-to-the-minute appraisal of the specific situation.

The Superintendent of Schools (or designee) will make every effort to decide school closings in a timely manner. This will be done after the district has thoroughly evaluated the situation and after consulting with the police, weather bureau, and other District departments. All school closings will be reported to local radio and television stations for broadcast to the general public and posted to **gateschili.org/SafetyPlan**. An automated phone call will also inform families of emergency closings whenever possible.

Whenever District schools close, all public, private, and parochial schools in the district are also closed. No transportation is provided for Gates students attending schools outside the district and all afternoon and evening activities will ordinarily be cancelled.

Parents, staff, and students should not call their neighborhood school, District Office, or radio and television stations to ask if schools are open. Telephone lines become tied up quickly, which prevents crucial calls from going through.

Parents should instruct their children on where they are to stay when school is closed, or when school is dismissed early. Working parents should make prior arrangements with friends and neighbors for the temporary housing of their children in the event that an emergency arises while they are not at home.

While the District will make every effort to make decisions that are in the students' best interest, weather, street, and sidewalk conditions can vary widely among individual schools because the district is so large. Weather conditions can also change radically within a very short period of time. For these reasons, parents are always the final authority in deciding if their children are to be sent to school during any given emergency when the schools are open.

Communications personnel are responsible for notifying the appropriate news agency to announce school closings or delays. The up-to-date list of news agencies notified will be maintained by the district.

7.2 DISTRICT EVACUATION AND EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

If a building needs to evacuate to another location:

- As soon as possible, the building will notify transportation that there is a possibility that we may have to evacuate the building and transport the students to an alternative location.
- Transportation will transport students to the building that is designated in the BLERP unless directed to take the students to a different location by the Incident Commander.

If there is a potential for an evacuation to send students home the process is as follows:

- As soon as possible, the building will notify transportation that there is a possibility that the building needs to be evacuated and the district needs to transport the student's home.
- The Transportation Department will run PM routes; therefore, both the Transportation Department and the building will print from PM routing sheets in the event that the decision is made to send the students home.
- It is important to note that the PM route sheets contain all of the special needs, babysitter and PM drop information.
- All drivers will be given a copy of the PM route sheet prior to leaving for their specific route.
- The Transportation Department will attempt to send buses that correspond to the actual PM route or place temporary bus numbers on those buses that do not correspond to the actual route.
- The district/building will work with Communications personnel to send a notice to parents that the district is sending the students home early so those at work or not at home can make proper arrangements.



Board of Education 2024-25

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The Gates Chili Central School District is dedicated to fostering curiosity, growth and diversity within our school community. The district celebrates and embraces differences and strives to dismantle exclusion, bias, racism, and prejudice of all forms.

GATESCHILI.ORG