

District-Wide School Safety Plan

Avoca Central School
17 Oliver St. #29
PO Box G
Avoca, NY 14809

In Compliance with the
Commissioner of Education Regulation 155.17

2023-2024
Approved by the Board of Education 8/22/23

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Project SAVE Introduction

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expedient 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 in order to coordinate 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 school 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 Avoca Central School District supports the SAVE Legislation and intends to facilitate the planning process. The School Superintendent encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The Avoca Central School District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the Avoca Central School District Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, Stephen Saxton, 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 Team

Avoca Central School District has created a District-wide School Safety Team consisting of various stakeholder representatives.

Stephen Saxton	Matthew Pfleegor
Scott Carroll	Deanna Wilkinson
Rosalie Smith	Robert Hyer
Michael Abbott	Scott Calkins
Heidi Burns	Sherry Weldy
Elizabeth Peck	Donald Rodbourn

C. Concepts of Operations

1. The Avoca Central School District’s District-Wide School Safety Plan is directly linked to The Building-Level Emergency Response Plan. Protocols reflected in the District-wide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of Building Level Emergency Response Plans.
2. In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies will be guided by the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. At that time, the building administrator or designee will contact the Superintendent or his designee of the incident.

3. The Superintendent or his/her designee will act as Threat Assessment Coordinator and activate the School Emergency Response Team. Where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified.
4. In recognition of the necessity of cooperation and partnerships between schools, local emergency responders, and community partners efforts will be made to employ an integrated systems approach to threat assessment. County and State resources may supplement efforts through existing protocols.

D. Plan and Adoption

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, this plan or Section 155.17 (e)(3), initially this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. Formal adoption of this plan by the School Board will occur only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any interested parties.

The plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the District-Wide School Safety Team. The annual review of the plan will be completed on or before July 1st.

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. A copy of the plan will be available on our website.

Full copies of the District-Wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department. Building-Level Emergency Response Plans will be supplied to both local and State Police within 30 days of adoption and not later than October 15th of each year.

SECTION II – RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY SITUATIONS/ACTS OF VIOLENCE

Risk Reduction and Intervention Components – Prevention/Intervention Strategies

A. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

1. In the event of an emergency or a violent incident, the initial response at the individual school will be by the Building-Level Emergency Response Team.
2. In the event of an emergency, the Superintendent or his/her designee will serve as the Building Incident Commander. As additional responders arrive, command will transfer on the basis of who has primary authority for overall control of the incident. The Superintendent, District Emergency Coordinator or Designee and/or a member of the local emergency response agency may replace the Building Incident Commander. As incidents grow in size or become more complex, the responsible jurisdiction or agency may assign a more highly qualified Incident Commander. At transfer of command, the outgoing Incident Commander must give the incoming Incident Commander a full briefing and notify all staff of the change of command.
3. After relinquishing command, the Superintendent or his/her designee may be asked to serve in a support role as part of the Unified Incident Command, if established, by the local Emergency Response Agency.
4. The District level chain of command has been developed, clearly defined, and lies with the District Superintendent and his/her designee chain of command to ensure continuity of operation is:
 - a. Superintendent/District Emergency Coordinator.
 - b. Assistant District Emergency Coordinator. (Building Principals)
 - c. School Resource Officer.

The Director of Facilities shall be responsible for the coordination of the District's use of resources.

B. Notification and Activation

In the event of a violent incident, the building principal will activate the Building-Level Emergency Response Team and notify the Superintendent and/or the District Emergency Coordinator. If warranted, the building principal will immediately call 911 and request for the appropriate agency (Police or Fire Department). The secretary may be directed to make this call.

1. All educational agencies within the district are notified of a disaster or act of violence. The following identify the forms of communication used:
 - a. Telephone.
 - b. Local Media.
 - c. E-Mail.
 - d. Emergency Alert System (Blackboard Connect/NaviGate Prepared).
 - e. Cell Phones.

In the event of an emergency, or impending emergency, the district will notify all principals/designees of facilities within the district to take appropriate actions.

Procedures are in place for releasing students to parent/guardians following an event.

In the event that a child's parent/guardian is not available to receive their child, a district administrator or designee will remain with the student(s). School building emergency forms that will be taken to the shelter with students are used to identify emergency names and phone numbers if a parent/guardian cannot be reached. Student(s) will only be allowed to leave with the named emergency contact person.

If the situation is such that an individual staff member cannot or will not stay at their assignment, it should be noted and told to the District Emergency Coordinator. Additional support staff will be brought to the site for supervision. District administrators will remain at the site until released by the District Emergency Coordinator.

Information on emergencies will be provided to the community as honestly and quickly as possible. It is important to note that during emergency situations, the appropriate authorities (New York State Police, Steuben County Sheriff's Office, Avoca Fire Department) are involved. We may only release information to the public after approval by the agency in charge.

C. Situational Responses

1. Severe Weather

- a. If the inclement weather or heavy snow indicates the appropriate action is remaining in school past normal hours, public notification will be provided via radio and television as directed by the Superintendent or designee.
 - Parents will be advised of preferred action, but may come to the school's Main Office and request their child. A staff member will be directed to get the student from his/her classroom. The parent will sign out the student so as to maintain a building attendance list.
- b. The Emergency Response Team shall report to the designated area and establish a Command Post.
- c. Faculty will maintain an attendance list.
- d. Students and staff will remain in the building until the Superintendent or designee releases them.
- e. The Command Post will decide appropriate steps of action, which may include the following:
 - The movement of furniture to provide emergency quarters
 - Preparation of food.
 - Establishing and staffing of phone lines and first aid treatment facilities.
 - Notification of the County Emergency Services of in-house emergency action.
 - Providing a program of calm entertainment to allay the fears of students.
 - Counsel faculty and staff concerning their duties and stations during the emergency.
 - Counsel and calm parent concern in regard to the welfare of their children in case of phone call or on-scene arrival.
 - Maintain a business-like demeanor to control situation and avoidance of panic.
 - Take whatever measures are necessary to secure the building from the weather.
 - Provide additional help for the elementary school.
 - Cooperate with all public officials until the emergency in-house situation has safely concluded.

2. Hazardous Materials Release

a. On Site

In the event of a release of hazardous materials within a building or on school grounds, the following action should be undertaken.

- Evacuate the area.
- Notify the fire department.
- If the product is known (i.e., natural gas, gasoline, fuel oil, etc.), this information should be relayed to the fire department. Attempt to keep materials from entering sewers and storm drains.
- If the material is not known, stay upwind and secure the area.

Note Well:

Where a gas leak is discovered the fire alarm system should not be used, as possible sparking or mechanical components of the bell system could cause the gas to explode. In such cases the school operator should be notified by voice immediately and direction to evacuate should be given over the P.A. System.

b. Off Site

In the event the school is notified of a release of hazardous materials off school grounds and instructed to stay inside, the following action should be undertaken:

- Close all doors. Close and lock all windows. Seal gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels or thick tape.
- Turn the ventilation system off.
- Seal any gaps around window air conditioners, bathroom exhaust fans, range vents, dryer vents.
- Close as many internal doors as possible.
- Close drapes, curtains and shades over windows. Stay away from windows.
- If you suspect that gas or vapor has entered the building, hold a wet cloth over your nose and mouth.

In the event the school is instructed to evacuate by the Fire Department or another agency, the following action should be undertaken:

- Evacuate the building.
- Use evacuation routes as instructed by the fire department--upwind of the incident.

The Department of Environmental Conservation is to be notified when petroleum or chemical release occurs.

3. Medical Emergency

Medical Response kits and personal protective equipment are available in all buildings. Standing orders for first aid procedures have been placed in each kit and are posted in the health office.

- a. If an acute emergency exists or the student/staff member is unable to proceed to the nurse's office, summon the nurse.

- b. If the nurse is not available and an obvious medical emergency exists; (i.e., severe bleeding, burn, or the patient has trouble breathing), call for an ambulance as soon as possible.
- c. If the person cannot be moved, keep him/her quiet, warm and comfortable. Do not under any circumstances give a person anything to eat or drink.
- d. Keep unauthorized people away from the person in question.
- e. Attempt to contact the parent or guardian of a student as soon as possible so that permission may be obtained by a medical facility to begin treatment as quickly as possible.
- f. All buildings will be equipped with an automated external defibrillator and will have trained personnel in place.

4. Infection Exposure Control - Universal Precautions/ Standard Operating Procedure

Adherence to infection control procedures including universal precautions must be strictly practiced at all times.

School personnel must use protective barrier equipment and measures to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure to any blood/body fluids during routine care, emergencies and/or accidents.

- a. Wash hands before and after all contact with an individual and associated materials using proper hand washing procedures.
- b. Use gloves for any procedure with potential for exposure to blood/body fluids.
- c. Use goggles, mask and apron when splash/splattering may be anticipated.
- d. Use a mouthpiece for resuscitation to eliminate mouth-to-mouth contact in a CPR situation.
- e. Place used syringes, needles, lancets (all sharp instruments) immediately in a nearby puncture proof impermeable container labeled medical or infectious waste. Never recap a syringe.
- f. Dispose of all contaminated materials in a covered waste receptacle lined with a disposable plastic bag.
- g. Call a cleaner/custodian for a clean-up of a large blood/body fluid spill.

5. Evaluation and Management of Employees Exposed to Blood or Potentially Infectious Body Fluid

Procedures for medical management of exposed employees have been developed as follows:

- a. Ascertain that an exposure has (may have) occurred. Criteria include (a) a parental exposure (needle stick or cut) or blood or other body fluids or (b) a cutaneous exposure involving large amounts of blood or prolonged contact with blood, especially when the exposed skin is chapped, abraded, or afflicted with dermatitis. An Incident Form should be filled out by the employee.
- b. Have the source person evaluated for potential HIV and HBV infection. If the source person is known, he/she should be informed of the incident and made aware that such exposure raises a concern about the presence (potential) of blood borne infection. A medical practitioner (either the source person's personal or Avoca Central School District attending physician) should categorize the source person to ascertain risk potential.
- c. Any employee of Avoca Central School District may receive a post exposure follow-up if the criteria

listed in (1) above are met. An incident form must be filled out and submitted to the School Health Office. The employee will in turn be referred to a specific medical authority for the follow-up procedures and necessary paperwork.

6. Fire/Explosion

- a. Pull a fire alarm box immediately.
- b. Immediately evacuate all staff and students from the area using exit instructions posted by the main door in the classroom, and assemble in the designated assembly area.
- c. Staff will take attendance of all the students to verify evacuation.
- d. Wait for further instructions as to further action.

Fire/Explosion Spill Emergency Plan Note Well:

Any person discovering a fire or smoke condition must immediately sound the fire alarm. There can be no hesitation about making such a decision. There must be no time lost while reporting to, or seeking further direction from any authority before sounding the alarm.

The alarm must also start the evacuation procedure automatically without the need for official confirmation or direction. All students, faculty, staff, and visitors must immediately evacuate the buildings.

- a. Any person discovering a fire or smoke, immediately pull the nearest fire alarm box.
- b. All persons, faculty, students, staff and visitors will exit the building (close all doors) using exit instructions posted by the main door of each room. They will assemble outside the building in the designated assembly areas. Staff and Command Post will take role to verify evacuation.
- c. All bus drivers will be notified, proceed to their bus and prepare to transport students.
- d. Staff will accompany their students on the bus.
- e. If the fire appears small and controllable, staff will promptly direct the charge of a fire extinguisher toward the base of the flame.
- f. Smoke is a great danger in a fire, so stay near the floor where the air will be less toxic.
- g. The Emergency Response Team shall report to the Command Post.
- h. Do not return into an evacuated building.

Note Well:

If you become trapped in a building during a fire and a window is available, place an article of clothing (shirt, coat, etc.) outside the window as a marker for rescue crews. If there are no windows, stay near the floor where the air will be less toxic. Shout at regular intervals to alert emergency crews of your location. (Do not panic!) Use a phone if available.

After an evacuation, report to your designated campus area assembly point. Stay there until an accurate head count and attendance roll is taken. The District Emergency Coordinator will assist in accounting for all building occupants.

7. Power Failure

- a. In the event of a power failure, all students and staff should stay in their respective classrooms. If the class is outdoors and a power failure occurs, the class should proceed back to their room and await further instructions. In addition:
- b. Do not, under any circumstances, touch or attempt to move any wires.
- c. If a person is in contact with wires, do not touch or attempt to move them.
- d. For your own safety, stay in the building. The wires outside the buildings may be over 45,000 volts. The ground and many items far from a down wire may be energized.

8. Violent Behavior – Prevention and Intervention

- a. All new employees are trained in nonviolent crisis intervention to identify potentially violent behavior and ways to de-escalate irate adults/students.
- b. The district has a Response to Intervention (RTI) team that meets regularly to identify, prevent and intervene with students who present with potentially dangerous behavior. Plans to replace these behaviors with socially acceptable behaviors are developed and monitored. Each school also has a social worker/guidance counselor and/or school psychologist that act as the liaison to community agencies that work with at-risk youth. Their purpose is to link support to potentially violent students to prevent dangerous behavior. Parents are involved in this process and when appropriate, the student.

9. Violent Behavior – Increased Awareness by Staff/Family

- a. Refer students who you suspect have the potential for violence to the appropriate school official or crisis center. Be proactive and attempt to open lines of communication with others; including the student's family.
- b. Monitor students, look for peculiarity. Recognize increased tardiness or absenteeism. Be alert to mood swings or verbal and physical communication that sends a negative message or action. Be alert to weapons being stashed on their personal being. Report concerns to appropriate school officials.
- c. Report suspicious persons or suspicious and threatening phone calls to school administration. Report parents or family members that respond irrationally to your communication concerning their child.
- d. When faced with difficult students or an emergency---remain calm, do not antagonize and keep a safe, non-confronting distance. Do not speak to them head on. Keep slightly to their side, so they feel that they can move away from you. Observe as much as you can about any suspicious person (i.e., height, weight, eye color, scars, etc.) and report to school administration as soon as possible.
- e. Keep your school environment as safe as possible. Remove window coverings that could prevent someone on the outside recognizing that you are in danger. Develop a buddy system or check on the teacher next to you or between periods, when you are monitoring hall movement. Remove items such as glass bottles or any other potential material objects that could be used as weapons.
- f. Do not attempt to handle any suspicious packages or materials that are unknown to you. Follow directions to the letter in an emergency. (Ex. if you are in an **emergency situation lockdown**) stay in your room---do not go out in the hall to see what's going on---you could be confronted by a violent person or interfere with law enforcement.
- g. The District Safety Committee met on July 17, 2023 and as per Alyssa's Law considered

the implementation of additional lockdown buttons throughout the school available for students and staff. The committee determined that they would like the district to pursue adding additional lockdown buttons in strategic areas throughout the school building and in the bus garage.

10. Implied or Direct Threats of Violence

The following procedure is separated into several sections in order to reflect those instances where a threatened act of violence may be received by specific individuals. **The threatened act of violence may be** on another individual, individuals, or themselves.

- a. Any student, upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
 - Assume the threat is serious.
 - Immediately report the threat to a parent/guardian, school staff, administrator or law enforcement officer.
 - Be available and cooperative in providing a statement of information, with the understanding that the information source (student) will remain anonymous to the greatest extent possible.
- b. Any parent or guardian, upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
 - Assume the threat is serious.
 - Immediately report the threat to school staff, administrators or law enforcement officers.
 - Be available and cooperative in providing a statement of information, with the understanding that the information source (parent/guardian) will remain anonymous to the greatest extent possible.
- c. Any school staff member upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
 - Assume the threat is serious.
 - Immediately report the threat to the Building Principal or Designee.
 - Be available and cooperative in providing a statement of information, with the understanding that the information source (staff member) will remain anonymous to the greatest extent possible.
- d. Any school administrator upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
 - Assume the threat is serious.
 - Cause the student making the threat, if said student is in a building or on school grounds, to be immediately removed from location and segregated into a secured area pending further investigation.
 - Notify a law enforcement officer if, upon further investigation, it is warranted.
 - Require the school staff member, if this is the source of the information, to provide immediate written statements regarding the information received.

11. Violent Behavior

- a. The Public Address (PA) System is to be used by the Principal or appointed representative to inform staff of an emergency. (Example: “Emergency procedures are in effect for a Hold in Place.”)
- b. Staff will confine all students to classrooms with doors closed.
- c. Administration will isolate the area and allow no admission.
- d. If the situation cannot be quickly ended, police will be called. Do not attempt to disarm any person. Remember, once law enforcement arrives, they are in control and will give appropriate direction and information.

12. Intruder

If an intruder enters a school, if possible, the PA system will be used to declare a “lockdown”. Any staff member shall be allowed to call a “lockdown” if they determine it is necessary. Adults should yell this in halls as this means moving within the school is dangerous and teachers need to close and lock classroom doors. Students should be moved out of view of the classroom doors and windows.

13. Hostage

- a. Be patient and remain calm. Time is on your side. Avoid drastic action.
- b. The initial 45 minutes are the most dangerous. Follow instructions, be alert and stay alive. The captor is emotionally unbalanced. Don’t make mistakes which could hazard your well-being.
- c. Don’t speak unless spoken to and then only when necessary. Don’t talk down to the captor who may be in an agitated state. Avoid appearing hostile. Maintain eye contact with the captor at all times, if possible, but do not stare. Physically, stay to the side of a hostile person, allow them an opportunity to move by you---do not corner or press them. Treat the captor like royalty. Try to get the person to see you as a human being.
- d. Try to rest. Avoid speculating. Comply with instructions as best you can. Avoid arguments. Expect the unexpected.
- e. Be observant. You may be released or escape. The personal safety of others may depend on your memory.
- f. Be prepared to answer the police on the phone. Be patient, wait. Attempt to establish rapport with the captor. If medications, first aid, or rest room privileges are needed by anyone, say so. The captors in all probability do not want to harm persons held by them. Failure to comply with your request further implicates the captor in additional offenses.
- g. Do not negotiate with other people (ex. priest, parent, friend, etc.). This should be handled by the police.

Note Well:

The first action would be to do whatever you can to escape the area. These steps are in the event you are taken hostage. If the captor has a weapon, and becomes violent, the individual(s) may need to fight to help minimize casualties.

14. Unauthorized Removal/Abduction

- a. The safety of the victim is paramount; nothing should be done to increase danger.
- b. If abduction is observed or suspected, call 911.
- c. Obtain a detailed description of the abductor (physical appearance, type of clothing, make/model/color/license plate of vehicle, direction of travel etc...).
- d. If possible, obtain a detailed description of clothing/time/location when student/staff was last seen and a photograph.
- e. Attempt to clarify the type of abduction – custodial or other.

Note Well:

Try to determine if there is a custody battle or other pending legal issues involving the student or staff. Are there any orders of protection or history of being missing or domestic violence? These should be communicated with authorities immediately.

15. Bomb Threat

DO NOT ACCESS OR USE WALKIE TALKIES!

- a. Announce “**Shelter in Place.**” Instruct everyone to remain where they are and scan their respective area for anything out of the ordinary.
- b. Call 911.
- c. Activate the Emergency Response Team. Instruct them to scan common areas for anything unusual.
 - **Effective bomb threat relies on the notion that information contained in a threat cannot be considered definitive; but rather, as clues which place the validity of the threat on a gradient scale between hoax (generic) and credible (specific, i.e. – date, time, location, method).*
- d. If no device is found, decide whether to continue school or evacuate. The school district administration may consult with police to make their decision.
- e. If a device is found, follow for “A Specific Bomb Threat.”

Specific Bomb Threat:

- a. Announce “**Shelter in Place.**”
- b. Call 911.
- c. Activate the Emergency Response Team. Instruct them to find an internal location to move the school population to, scan and clear the location and a route to it. Move those in the affected area to the established and cleared location.
- d. Assist first responders as necessary.

Shelter in Place Objectives:

- a. To minimize injury or death.
- b. To locate and contain any device or weather damage.
- c. To facilitate emergency responses.
- d. To establish safe routes and designated areas.

IF YOU OBSERVE A SUSPICIOUS OBJECT OR POTENTIAL BOMB ON CAMPUS, DO NOT HANDLE THE OBJECT!

- a. Notify the Principal's office. Principals should contact the Superintendent's office or Emergency Response Coordinator.
- b. A follow-up call will be made to the Police Agency.

DO NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO GO TO THEIR LOCKERS.

- a. Faculty should bring their class records/attendance with them during all fire drills or evacuation of buildings. Encourage your students to remain with you during all drills.
- b. Wait for further instructions as to further action.

Any person receiving a **phone call bomb threat** should ask the caller:

- a. When is the bomb going to explode?
- b. Where is the bomb located?
- c. What kind of bomb is it?
- d. What does it look like?
- e. Why did you place the bomb?
- f. What is your name? (Sometimes the caller may be caught off guard and may give you their name.)

Keep talking to the caller as long as possible and record the following:

- a. Time of call.
- b. Age and sex of the caller.
- c. Speech pattern, accent, possible nationality, etc.
- d. Emotional state of the caller.
- e. Background noise.

Please print this message and keep it near the phone along with **BOMB THREAT REPORT** forms.

If you receive a bomb threat, it is **CRITICAL** that you:

- a. Record the date and exact time of the call.

Immediately notify the Principal, who will notify the Superintendent or his designee.

Report the incident.

- b. Law Enforcement will conduct a detailed bomb search. Employees are requested to make a cursory inspection of their area for suspicious objects and to report the location to the responding Law Enforcement Agency. **DO NOT TOUCH THE OBJECT!** Do not open drawers, cabinets, or turn lights on or off.
- c. When the building evacuation is announced, or an emergency exists, walk quickly to the nearest marked exit and alert others to do the same.
- d. **Assist the handicapped in exiting the building! Do not panic.**
- e. Once outside, move to a clear area at least 300 feet away from the affected building. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants, and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
- f. If requested, assist Emergency crews as necessary.
- g. **Do not return to an evacuated building** unless told to do so by an official.

Important:

After any evacuation, be ready to report to your designated off-campus assembly area. Stay there until an accurate **headcount** is taken. The Emergency Coordinator will assist the principal or designee in accounting for all building occupants.

Note:

- Keep all cabinets, files, drawers, etc. that can be locked, locked when not in use to reduce potential bomb placements. Keep your rooms organized and neat so that you might be alert to strange packages or objects.
- Do not handle any potential evidence.

Remember: No one is obligated to assist in a bomb search. Your participation is voluntary.

SECTION III: COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS

A. Severe Weather/Emergency Situations

Warnings of severe weather conditions are generally issued by the National Weather Service. The district transmits closings/early closings/delays through automated calls to parents/staff, the district website, TV station announcements and radio. The District also maintains vigilance in monitoring weather situations to promptly identify potential issues.

The Police and Fire Department will notify the Superintendent if an external emergency exists. When an emergency exists outside of the normal school hours, the Superintendent is called, and he/she will institute the district response.

B. Violent Incident

When a student is involved in any violent situation, a parent/guardian shall be contacted immediately by the building principal. All disciplinary actions shall be in accordance with the school district's Code of Conduct and New York State Law.

Emergency Response Teams shall develop procedures for contacting parents/guardians in the event of violent incidents and emergency situations. The communications may include phone calls, letters, email or an automated call and should be implemented only after consultation with the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The district's Code of Conduct will be communicated on a yearly basis to all staff, students and parents.

The district will utilize the district's website and local media at the discretion of the Superintendent.

C. School Crisis Management – Media Response

In the event that your Building-Level Emergency Response Plan is put into action, you should be ready to deal with the media. The following information should serve as a guideline for your use.

1. Determine the situation:
 - a. Range of response.
 - b. Size of the event.
 - c. Who will it affect?
 - d. How long will it last?
2. Contact district-level administration.
3. Inform your staff. They need to know what is going on. They will be asked and it is critical that information is concise and accurate.
 - a. Inform students at the appropriate time.
 - b. Inform parents at the appropriate time.
 - c. Inform the media at the appropriate time.
4. Depending on the range of the response be ready to deal with incoming parents and the media.
 - a. Work quickly to script a brief response, (involve when appropriate, the Superintendent, or

his designee, principal, local authorities, police, fire, etc.) so the message is the same for all. Give an honest statement no matter how hard it is. Ask all staff to give only the scripted response. (The script should give enough information for phone callers or those coming on-site to be informed and dismissed quickly).

- b. **Be certain that you have the approval of the Law Enforcement or Fire Department before releasing any information when they are involved in a formal investigation.**
- c. Assign or designate an area for the media and parents to be informed by appropriately assigned school personnel.
- d. District-Level administration will access appropriate media (radio, television, etc.) contacts if necessary.
- e. The building principals, and when appropriate in conjunction with District-Level administrators, will determine who will be the spokesperson for the school district. (This is critical as the community and those you serve clearly want to identify with someone in charge).

SECTION VI: RECOVERY

A. District Support for Buildings

The Avoca Central School District is committed to the welfare of its students and staff. Following the occurrence of an emergency or violent incident, the District-Wide School Safety Committee will convene with the Emergency Response Team and Post-Incident Response Team to help with recovery. Together, they will review the emergency crisis, the interventions and the outcomes of those actions. In this recovery phase, the current Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will be re-evaluated and new strategies that may include additional security needs, crisis management training and/or development of new post-crisis procedures to restore safety as quickly as possible will be implemented. These plans will be taken to the Emergency Response Team in the other school buildings for perusal and possible implementation into their plans.

If the building is rendered as unsafe for occupancy, students will be relocated and continue their education at an alternate site.

B. Disaster Mental Health Services

The first program instituted immediately in response to the crisis is the school-based mental health program with its access to the district’s mental health professionals: school psychologist, school social workers and the school guidance counselors. They understand the reactions of the individuals involved in this crisis and are familiar with individual’s reactions to stress, the response to loss as well as the developmental considerations, religious beliefs and cultural norms. This staff will provide support and intervention services that will coordinate with resources of the school district. Additional Mental Health Services are readily attainable from local, county, state and federal agencies all willing to assist the district to assist individuals who are at-risk for severe stress response.

Emergency and Counseling Resources:

Nicholas Noyes Memorial Hospital – Emergency	(585) 335-6001
Noyes Mental Health Services	(585) 335-4316
Steuben County Mental Health	(607) 664-2255/2487
Hornell Clinic	(607) 324-2483

C. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Project SAVE (Safe Schools against Violence in Education) District/School Safety Plan

1. Program Initiatives

The Project SAVE Legislation emphasizes the importance of "appropriate prevention strategies such as non-violent conflict resolution training programs, peer mediation programs, and extended day and other school safety programs." Effective proactive prevention means providing the school as a "community of caring;" offering every opportunity for all students to be actively and successfully engaged in academics and extracurricular activities, and to be connected to the school community

through significant, healthy relationships with caring adults. This includes clear behavior expectations and consistently enforced consequences, constant recognition and celebration of "catching students doing it right," establishing a school climate that insists upon treating everyone with dignity and respect, implementing programs that empower our students to be active in programs such as peer leadership and peer mediation. Students are in fact, our greatest resource! Students may also be active participants on the school and district SAFE Schools committees, and in establishing violence prevention curriculum that addresses the components of empathy, impulse control, and anger management skills, and offering corrective supportive intervention strategies for achieving academic success. Every school is expected to incorporate these elements into our daily practice.

Strategies for improving communication among and between students and staff consist of the establishment of youth-run programs. Other approaches are peer mediation, conflict resolution, and creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence. The following is a list of some of the many Avoca Central School District prevention strategies:

- a. Life skills training groups.
- b. Buddy programs between grade levels.
- c. Mentoring (pairing of differently-aged students).
- d. Athletic programs.
- e. Various clubs.
- f. Partnership with higher education.
- g. Forum with parents.
- h. Parent/child/staff surveys.
- i. Drama programs.
- j. Student Councils and Student Ambassador.

2. Training, Drills and Exercises

Multi-hazard Training, Drills and Exercises

- a. Administrator – training in ICS 100 (Incident Command System), to include tabletop drill, the components of an effective emergency response plan and the role of local law and emergency representative.
- b. School-Based Staff and Students – engaged in practicing live drills.
- c. School Staff – engaged in tabletop exercises, live drills, and review of district-wide and building- level safety plans during staff meetings.

Each of the Building Principals will collaborate to perform the following activities:

- a. Appoint a Building-Level Emergency Response Team that may include: the principal, school social worker/psychologist, school nurse, teacher(s), students, counselors, cleaner, law enforcement officials, parents, community members, a representative from the local ambulance or other emergency response agency, and other school personnel.
- b. Establish a chain of command in case the principal is absent.
- c. Oversee the safety training of all building personnel.
- d. Provide prevention and intervention strategies for students.

- e. Set up lines of communication (electronic), to alert personnel to situations when school is recessed.
- f. Keep a daily list of all student/staff absentees in the main office.
- g. Assign potential locations for counseling rooms, triage, and medical stations and support sites in hallways, near bathrooms, faculty rooms, locker rooms, and the cafeteria.
- h. Have teachers assigned to create a list of alternative activities in lieu of normally scheduled classwork.
- i. Establish anonymous reporting for potential acts of violence of which students may have knowledge; teach importance of “no secrets about this.”
- j. Oversee or provide opportunities for faculty and staff members to receive annual multi-hazard training (e.g., tabletop, go-home, and secure building drills).
- k. Provide opportunities for training for school staff as offered through the New York State Police programs for schools and communities.

Each member of the Leadership Team must receive training in the following:

- a. Understanding basic emergency procedures - review the Staff Quick Reference Guide to Emergency Response.
- b. Functions of the Command Post.
- c. Bomb Threats.
- d. The Alternative Shelter Plan.
- e. The School Go-Home Plan.
- f. Roster of Emergency Personnel.
- g. Use of Building Incident Report Form.
- h. Preliminary Planning for Emergency/Crisis Management.

Each Crisis Team must receive post incident training in the following:

- a. Education on the range of emotions that will be displayed following a tragedy.
- b. How to interact with grieving individuals.
- c. How to support family and community members.
- d. How to support teachers and fellow team members.
- e. How to interact with community helping groups.

In-service training must be provided to appropriate staff members, as identified by leadership team or crisis team in the following areas:

- a. How staff will be informed of tragedy.
- b. How students will be informed of tragedy.
- c. How to maintain order immediately after news of the tragedy and as time passes.
- d. Who to contact for professional support.
- e. Classroom activities that will provide support for students.
- f. How parents/caregivers will receive communication.

District Crisis Management Team will be developed to do the following:

- a. Provide support for building teams.

- b. Provide continued development of both emergency and crisis management plans.
- c. Make recommendations for training and equipment.
- d. Provide mental health specialists to sites on as-needed basis within limits of available support.

The District Emergency Coordinator in consultation with the District Crisis Management Team will prepare support services in the following manner:

- a. Establish a telephone tree for district mental health and health workers.
- b. Meet with district faculty to plan anticipatory strategies.

3. Implementation of School Security

The following building procedures relating to school building security have been implemented in the AVOCA CSD:

- a. Signs are posted indicating that parents and visitors must report to the main office to sign in and out.
- b. All visitors and volunteers are furnished with name badges.
- c. Building entrance security is maintained throughout the day.
- d. Canine units randomly search for drugs.
- e. Currently there are internal and external cameras at the elementary school and middle-high school at a variety of locations.
- f. At the elementary and middle-high school level, teacher aides, teaching assistants and teachers supervise students during the lunch hour and throughout the remainder of the day in classrooms, hallways and common areas.
- g. School Resource Officer – The District has a School Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO assists the school administration in maintaining a safe and secure environment. The SRO provides a highly visible presence to deter or identify trespassers on campus.

D. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSE TO VIOLENT ACTS

Each school has a building team that addresses the academic, social, safety, and emotional needs of their students. This forum provides an opportunity for discussions among family, teachers, counselors, social workers, and school administration in regard to potentially violent students in their building and the manner in which intervention may be provided.

The **AVOCA CSD** has cooperation from state and local law enforcement agencies in assisting with these matters.

1. Response to Violent Actions

Please keep the following guidelines in operation while implementing the process of responding to a violent act:

- a. Inform staff members of their responsibilities. Inform the Superintendent.
- b. Inform parents, caregivers, and persons in parental roles. Send notification home for any incident that potentially impacts a significant number of students (including general

- information about the incident).
- c. In violent incidents necessitating building evacuation with a go-home plan, notify parents via mass media and, through the district student information system.
 - d. In general, in the event of a violent incident involving the entire building, students should not be allowed to use phones until a building-wide plan is in place and a decision regarding student phone calls is made by the building administrator.
 - e. If only a small number of certain students are involved and/or impacted by a violent act, contact each of these students' parents and invite them to meet with you. Be sensitive to confidential issues regarding student records and families.

Note: If Student Discipline is needed, refer to the **AVOCA CSD** Code of Conduct.

E. Hazard Identification

The potential emergency incidents for the **AVOCA CSD** include:

1. Infectious diseases.
2. Bomb threats/suspicious objects.
3. Building collapse.
4. Vehicular accidents.
5. Earthquake.
6. Storms, including tornadoes.
7. Explosion.
8. Falling objects.
9. Flooding.
10. Kidnapping.
11. Weapons on campus.
12. Unauthorized visitors on campus.
13. Fire.
14. Chemical hazards.

Sites where potential emergency incidents may occur within the **AVOCA CSD** include:

1. Highways and roads adjacent to the school buildings.
2. On the premises – classrooms, hallways, gymnasium, playground, athletic fields, boiler room.
3. Bus garage.
4. Off-site field trips.
5. Science laboratories.
6. Other educational facilities.
7. Pipelines.
8. Commercial Businesses.

SECTION V – AWARENESS/PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

BOMB THREATS - Preventive Measures Checklist

Depending upon the needs of a school district, policies, procedures, and informational materials should be developed to encourage the reporting of any incident designed to threaten life and property, such as a bomb threat. Preventive measures may include the following:

1. Make all employees responsible for scanning their areas of work for suspicious objects.
2. Establish an immediate reporting system for students and staff to report the presence of “strangers” in the building and/or unusual or suspicious objects.
3. To insure testing integrity, develop contingency plans for bomb scares during times of academic examinations.
4. Train personnel in a school who would generally be the first recipients of a telephone bomb threat; law enforcement agencies are a good training source.
5. Conduct drills to assure students/staff are aware of school emergency plan procedures.
6. Invite law enforcement personnel to discuss the legal implications of calling in false alarms and bomb threats with students and staff.
7. Lock custodial closets and rooms that are not occupied in order to limit access.
8. Keep lobby areas free of trash receptacles (other than wire mesh) and furniture that would allow for placing objects out of view.
9. Place fire extinguishers in each building every 75 feet, in accordance with NFPA Publication #10 as provided by the NYSED.
10. Have school health and safety committees discuss with the State Police or the local law enforcement agency other measures to ensure the building security.

BUILDING COLLAPSE – Awareness Information

Should staff note any of the following warning signs, the prudent action is to evacuate and then notify the appropriate personnel immediately.

1. Portions of buildings as well as entire buildings have been known to collapse without warning. New and old, under repair or under new construction, steel, masonry or wooden, there is no pattern to building collapse.
2. Often a building will give some pre-collapse warnings such as plaster falling from the ceiling or dust dropping or sounds of strain.

EARTHQUAKE – Awareness Information

1. Earthquakes often occur as a series of quakes. When the initial earth tremor subsides, it may be followed by a second and third.
2. The onset of major earthquakes is indicated by deep rumbling sounds or a rushing sound of disturbed air. The sounds of creaking, groaning, and building strains are perceptible just before a quake.
3. Due to the disruptive forces of an earthquake, utilities such as gas lines, electrical services, and stored fuels become hazards that evolve into fires and explosions.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH/AIR QUALITY – Awareness Information

The following conditions may add to indoor air quality (IAQ) problems and therefore **should be avoided in AVOCA CSD classrooms**. (See RESOURCES SECTION)

1. **Animals in classrooms**, especially animals that are allowed to run freely in the classroom on the carpet, as opposed to always being confined to cages. The following is excerpted (and slightly modified) from EPA’s IAQ Tools for Schools Action Kit.

Certain individuals, in particular those with asthma, are sensitive to animal fur, dander, body fluids, and feces and may experience reactions to these allergens. Furthermore, individuals can become sensitized (made allergic) by repeated exposure to animal allergens.

Minimize exposure to animal allergens

- a. Keep animals in cages as much as possible; do not let them roam.
- b. Clean cages regularly.
- c. Locate animals away from ventilation systems to avoid circulating allergens throughout the room or building.
- d. Avoid bringing animals into classrooms if possible.

Take special care with asthmatic or other sensitive students

Before bringing an animal into the classroom:

- a. Consult the Principal for permission.
- b. Consult the school nurse about student allergies or sensitivities.
- c. Ask parents about potential allergies in a note that students take home or during parent teacher conferences.
- d. Recommendation of advanced notification to parents and guardians of all students in a classroom before bringing any animal into a classroom.

And then:

- e. Remember to check for allergies when new students enter the class.
- f. Locate sensitive students away from animals and habitats, or better yet, do not bring an animal into the classroom if there are asthmatic students or students who are sensitive to animals in the classroom.

Also, some animals can harbor human pathogens, which can infect occupants of the classroom where an infected animal is being kept. The human pathogen does not necessarily affect the animal, so the animal may not show any signs or symptoms of infection even if they are infected with a human pathogen.

2. **Plants or terrariums in the classroom** should not be kept on or near the unit ventilators. Mold spores which may be in the soil or water will be spread more easily throughout the room or buildings if plants or terrariums are located near the ventilation systems.

3. **Water damaged materials in the classroom** can be an indication of mold growth. Therefore, any staff member should immediately report any signs of water infiltration into a classroom or office to the building custodian. Signs that may be obvious are water damaged ceiling tiles or a wet ceiling, floor, or carpet (due to a pipe or roof leak).

4. **Plants or other organic matter near outside fresh air intakes of unit ventilators** can cause microorganisms growing in the soil and decaying plant material to be brought inside the classroom. The area immediately adjacent to the outside fresh air intakes of unit ventilators should be kept free of all plant and organic matter (except grass) for a distance of at least three feet in front of the intake and for a distance of at least one foot on each side of the intake. Ideally, this area should be paved or have concrete installed so that it is sloped in such a way that it allows water to drain away from the building.
5. **Blocking air supply grates of unit ventilators or turning unit ventilators off** will decrease the amount of fresh air that is supplied to a classroom, therefore causing pollutant levels in a classroom to rise to levels that may cause problems for occupants.
6. **Classrooms with direct access to the outdoors** should not allow people to enter directly into the classroom. All visitors are to enter through the main entrances for security. There should be a mat in front of the classroom door for people to wipe their feet on in the event that they do enter by that door. With carpets generally being shampooed only once a year, this practice will prolong the cleanliness of a classroom carpet.
7. **Avoid eating over carpeted areas of rooms.** Dropped food crumbs or spilled drinks are much easier to remove from tile. These items cannot be as easily or thoroughly removed from carpet. These food particles can later serve as a food source for mold and bacteria growth if there is sufficient moisture present. If the relative humidity in a room reaches 55 or 60 percent or greater, then some fungi can begin growing if they also have a food source present. So we want to try to not provide a ready food source when the relative humidity reaches these higher levels during the late spring, summer, and early fall.
8. **Observe general housekeeping in the room.** For example, if flour has been used in making paper-mâché masks, then it is important to thoroughly clean up the flour when the class project is completed. Otherwise, the flour can serve as a nutrient source for microbial growth if sufficient moisture is present. Likewise, if rice or peas or grains used to replace sand in sandboxes becomes moist, then microbial growth can occur in those locations as well.
9. **In case of temperature extremes,** contact the building custodian immediately. Do not attempt to adjust the thermostat or turn off the air-handling unit. The building custodian will determine the appropriate course of action to correct the problem.

EXPLOSION –Awareness Information

Explosions are often followed by secondary explosions and/or fire. Students should be removed from exposure to possible flying glass (at least 300 feet from building or further as directed by emergency personnel on the scene).

FLOODING – Awareness Information

Flood Watch: Conditions are favorable for flooding. Make staff aware, but take no action.

Flood Warning: Rising water threatens to close roads, wash out bridges and inundate property.

Move to shelter on higher ground.

Determine what the average flood depths are in the community.

If you are in a flood-prone area, store materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber to protect windows and make quick repairs (to those schools that are applicable). Identify dams in your area. Be aware of what could happen if they fail. Learn the community's flood evacuation route and the location of high ground.

KIDNAPPING

1. Pre-Planning Procedures

- a. Building security procedures will be instituted that will make illegal access to the building unlikely.
- b. All visitors will enter through the front door and sign in at the main office. Schools will provide a visitor tag for all visitors. Tag is returned to the office when the visitor leaves.
- c. The parent handbook should have visitor procedures listed.
- d. Teachers should be instructed not to release children to any individual they do not know without first checking with the office.
- e. Divorced parents should provide the school administrator with custodial information, i.e., to whom the child is released, and the names of those people to whom the child should not be released, if any.
- f. Principals will go over this information with teachers before the opening of school every fall.

2. Prevention Notes

- a. Schools need accurate and updated emergency contacts for all students. Make sure school office personnel have a list of students who are not to be released to anyone except a particular parent or guardian.
- b. If school staff do not know the emergency contact picking up a student the emergency contact must show a picture ID.

MAIL HANDLING PROTOCOL

NYS Health Department/New York State Police Bio-Terror Prevention Protocols
Protocols for Mail Handling

General

1. All businesses and organizations should assess and review their protocols for handling mail. Common sense and care should be used in inspecting and opening mail or packages.
2. Examine unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.
3. Do not open letters with your hands; use a letter opener.
4. Open letters and packages with a minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.
5. Each organization should assess whether it is a possible target for criminal acts. Based on this assessment, you may wish to take additional precautions such as wearing gloves and restricting the opening of mail to a limited number of trained individuals.

What Types of Letters and Packages May Be Suspect

1. Any letter or package that has suspicious or threatening messages written on it.
2. Letters with oily stains.
3. Envelopes that are lopsided, rigid, bulky, discolored, or have a strange odor.
4. Envelopes with no return address.
5. Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries.
6. No postage or non-cancelled postage.
7. Improper spelling of common names, places, or titles.

For Suspect Envelopes

Train staff responsible for mail handling to:

1. DO NOT OPEN ENVELOPE OR PACKAGE.
2. LEAVE it and EVACUATE the room.
3. KEEP others from entering the room.
4. NOTIFY your supervisor, who should call 911 or the local law enforcement authorities.

VISITORS/INTRUDER – Authorized/Unauthorized

Every staff member is responsible for the safety of students and the school. Therefore, it is essential that every adult in our schools follow procedures that will ensure the safety of everyone. This includes clear identification of our **AVOCA CSD** employees (by means of a photo identification tag) and visitors (visitor badges) to our building on a daily basis.

Visitors, while welcome in school for their contributions to the education of children, are only to remain in school for purposes directly related to their authorized visit. All visitors must follow the procedures established by the building. This includes signing in and noting time when entering the building, wearing an identification tag/badge during their visit, and signing out and noting time when leaving. This includes the following: substitute teachers, family members, students not enrolled in our district, volunteers, contractors, and vendors. A visitor who enters or remains in a school without authorization may be considered an intruder. If such determination is made, all necessary precautions and actions should be taken. The visitor registry shall be supervised by office staff members. Each leadership team shall be responsible for establishing this procedure and determining the person(s) responsible for this task. Any group using a district facility will submit a building use form to the facility use coordinator. The facility use coordinator will be responsible for reviewing the visitor procedure with that group/individual.

A threat assessment of all authorized or unauthorized visitors may be made immediately by any school staff member. If determined that a visitor is placing people and/or property of the school ***in imminent danger***, or is a disruption to the learning process, these emergency actions should be taken:

1. Alert the main office or designee by any means available.
2. Await further instructions from the person in charge of the building or the designee.
3. The person in charge of the building will determine additional actions, which may include “Lockdown Procedures” designed by each school.

SECTION VI – APPENDIX

A. SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER – Scope of Work

School Resource Officer for Avoca Central School

Role of the County and SRO.

- a. SRO will report directly to the County Sheriff or his/her designee;
- b. Provide for the security and safety of students, staff and visitors;
- c. Protect school property and maintain order in and around the school site;
- d. Attend Superintendent's hearings with students as requested by the District with the understanding the District has the sole role of disciplining students;
- e. Provide intervention between students and/or staff using appropriate techniques to calm and control situations;
- f. Under the supervision of the County Sheriff or his/her designee, and in coordination with the District's administration, investigate crimes and incidents occurring on and in the vicinity of school ground;
- g. To the degree permitted by New York State law, report violations of law, school rules, regulations or policies to the District's administration;
- h. Enforce governing New York State and Federal laws, rules and regulations and assist the District in meeting requirements mandated by New York State law;
- i. Act as liaison with police and other emergency personnel;
- j. Build relationships by being a liaison between the County Sheriff's Office and the District;
- k. To the extent permitted by New York State law, advise the District administration of any circumstance or situation that may create any potential harm to persons, or damage to, or loss of property;
- l. When appropriate and legally permissible, screen persons entering the building or school grounds. The level of invasiveness with respect to the screen shall be in the SRO's trained discretion and warranted under New York State Law;
- m. Become familiar with hidden recesses in the District's buildings and check them periodically;
- n. Be highly visible and maintain post integrity. The SRO may respond off post for school related incidents and/or will respond to priority calls when the SRO is the closest available unit;
- o. Question any individual not having appropriate identification to ascertain his/her status;
- p. Develop and maintain a positive and open relationship with students, administrators, faculty, staff, and parents;
- q. When requested, participate in meetings with school officials, parents or the School Board to assist in dispute resolution and/or in developing policy and procedures concerning school safety. Additionally, provide information to students and staff in regards to DWI's, weapons, sale of illegal drugs, etc.;
- r. Seize and store/dispose of any illegal substance or contraband seized by school officials as required/not required for evidence prosecution;
- s. Educate potential school-age victims in crime prevention and safety;
- t. Develop or expand crime prevention efforts for students and
- u. The SRO will properly secure and maintain all County issued equipment.

SECTION VI – APPENDIX

B. PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY – Continuation of Operations Plan

Timeline

Presented to District-Wide School Safety Committee and Bargaining Unit Presidents as a full draft on March 23, 2021

Feedback from District-Wide School Safety Committee and Bargaining Unit Presidents received and incorporated into the document by April 20, 2021

District-Wide School Safety Committee and Bargaining Unit Presidents gives indication of support to full document by April 27, 2021

Public Hearing Notice posted on August 13, 2021

Public Hearing on September 13, 2021 in Room 137 at 3:30 p.m.

Item placed on Board of Education Agenda for adoption on September 21, 2021

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 paragraph m 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 the AVOCA CSD Civil Service Employees Association, AVOCA Teachers' Association, AVOCA CSD Administrators' and Professionals' Association, as required by the amended New York State Labor Law, as well as the AVOCA CSD District-Wide School Safety Committee as required by the NYSED SAVE Safe Schools Plan Ed 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.

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 paragraph m 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, requiring 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 Avoca CSD. 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
- Face coverings for respiratory illnesses as applicable and appropriate
- 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 Avoca CSD, their designee, or their successor holds the authority to execute and direct the implementation of this plan. Implementation, monitoring of operations, and adjustments to plan implementation may be supported by additional personnel, at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Upon the determination of implementing this plan, all employees, and contractors of Avoca CSD shall be notified by email and district website posting, with details provided as possible and necessary, with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis. Parents, guardians, and community members will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of district website posting and/or Mass Notifications system. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by email as necessary. The Superintendent and/or Communications Specialist will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

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

Upon resolution of the public health emergency, the Superintendent of Avoca CSD, 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, Avoca CSD 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 Avoca CSD

Avoca CSD 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 Avoca CSD have been identified as:

Essential Function	Description
Food Service	Provides breakfast and lunch to students who participate in all models of learning (in person, remote, and hybrid).
Maintenance & Custodial	Maintenance provides daily maintenance and repairs. Custodial Provides cleaning and disinfection of district buildings.
Information Technology	Provides hardware along with technical assistance for remote students and staff.
Administration Operations	Oversees the development of plans, employment, policies, and procedures for emergency planning, mitigation, and recovery.
Business Operations	Processes invoices, payments, and payroll.
Clerical Operations	Answers phone calls and processes mail.
Human Resources	Ensures compliance with best practices by staff.
Transportation	Maintains transportation equipment.
Special Services	Serves as a liaison between the school district and the local Health Department.
Childcare	Child Care Resources & Referral (CCR&R) agency
Teaching	Provide instruction to students (depending on remote/hybrid/in-person learning models)
Construction	Oversees the entire construction project from planning to conducting the work.

Essential Positions

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

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Food Service	Cafeteria Manager Food Service Worker	The Cafeteria Manager establishes the food menu, organizes staff, and coordinates food distribution. Food Service Worker prepares meals on-site and assists with food distribution.
Maintenance & Custodial	Director of Facilities Maintenance Staff Custodial Staff	The Director of Facilities oversees the maintenance and custodial staff, establishes task priorities, and coordinates the supplies. Maintenance Staff performs maintenance duties within the building, including repairs. Custodial Staff routinely cleans and disinfects the district buildings.
Information Technology	IT Supervisor IT Staff	The IT Supervisor establishes all priorities for IT tasks and organizes staff. IT staff members provide support in setting up hardware and software, network management, and help desk support.
Administrative Operations	Superintendent of Schools Building Principals	The Superintendent oversees emergency planning, daily operations, and community/district communication. The Principals oversee daily building operations, supervise employees, and building communication.
Business Operations	Business Administrator Business Office Staff	The Business Administrator, as part of the administrative team, assists with emergency planning, establishes task priorities, and oversees business office staff. The Business Office Staff process supplies/order invoices, makes payments, and completes payroll.
Clerical Operations	Clerical Staff	Clerical Staff fields incoming phone calls and processes mail.
Human Resources	Superintendent	The Superintendent acts as the contact for schools and stakeholders, families, staff, and other school community members on matters related to procedures and will ensure the district is in compliance and following the best practices per state and federal guidelines.

Essential Function	Essential Positions/Titles	Justification for Each
Transportation	Transportation Director Bus Driver Bus Attendant Bus Mechanic	The Transportation Director oversees the transportation staff and establishes task priorities. Bus Drivers transport students. Bus Attendants assist with the transportation of students on school buses. Mechanics ensure the buses, and any other equipment are in working order.
Special Services	CSE Chairperson Special Education Teacher School Counselors OT/PT Speech Therapist Special Education Aide/Asst	Special Education Teachers provide instruction to students. School Counselors to provide mental health support. OT/PT/Speech Therapy provide various forms of therapy to special education students. Special Education Aides provide assistance for special education teachers and students.
Teaching	Teachers	Provide curriculum instruction to students depending on remote/hybrid/in-person learning models.
Construction	Architect Engineer Contractors Sub-Contractors Project Manager Construction Workers	The construction team oversees the entire construction project from planning to conducting the work.

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 work remotely
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
 - i. Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

Any staff member that is working remotely will be assigned a district computer with the appropriate access to secure network drives. Staff members have the ability to dial in to their district phone extension from any phone line.

As a general rule, teachers would come into the building and teach from their classrooms while students are learning remotely. However, specific circumstances that necessitate differing arrangements may need to be considered to properly accommodate faculty & staff.

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, Avoca CSD 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

Positions & Job Titles with Staggered Work Hours	Approval by	Building Access	Utilities Access (heat, lights, restrooms)	Building Security
Day shift cleaner to work 2nd shift	Director of Facilities	Door swipe access card modified for evening access.	Available for entire 2nd shift	Leaves building before maintenance mechanic makes final building check

Personal Protective Equipment

Identification of PPE Need

The details to implement these steps during the essential function period are as follows:

Essential Employee Job Titles and Contractors	Location	PPE per Supervisor's Hazard Assessment
Cafeteria Manager Food Service Worker	District-Wide	Face Coverings Disposable Gloves
Director of Facilities Maintenance Staff Custodial Staff	District-wide	Face Coverings Disposable Gloves Goggles or Face Shields
IT Supervisor IT Staff	District-wide	Face Coverings Disposable Gloves
Superintendent of Schools Principals	District Office	Face Coverings

Business Administrator Business Office Staff	District Office	Face Coverings
Essential Employee Job Titles and Contractors	Location	PPE per Supervisor's Hazard Assessment
Clerical Staff	District- wide	Face Coverings
Transportation Supervisor Bus Driver Bus Attendant Bus Mechanic	Bus Garage	Face Coverings Disposable Gloves Goggles or Face Shields
CSE Chairperson Special Education Teacher OT/PT Speech Therapist Special Education Aide/Assistant Nurse	District- wide	Surgical Masks Face Coverings Disposable Gloves Goggles or Face Shields Disposable Gowns
Teachers Teaching Assistant	District- wide	Face Coverings Disposable Gloves (upon request)
Architect Engineer Contractors Sub-Contractors Project Manager Construction Workers	District- wide	Face Coverings

*District-wide means Elementary School, Middle School, High School, District Office, Bus Garage, Maintenance Bldgs.

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

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

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

Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of need for PPE based upon job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE

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

PPE Suppliers and Backup Suppliers	Cleaning & Disinfectant Suppliers & Backup Suppliers
Supervisors and Administrators should keep current supply contractor information on hand.	Supervisors and Administrators should keep current supply contractor information on hand.
Backup Supplier Steuben County Emergency Management 3 East Pulteney Square Bath, NY 14810	

Storage, Access, and Monitoring of PPE Stock

Location	PPE Bulk Storage stored in a manner to prevent degradation	PPE Immediate Access Storage stored in a manner to prevent degradation	Stock Monitoring & Ordering Provided by
Main Building	Maintenance Storage Building	Nurse’s Office Head Custodian Office Main Office	Department Directors and Supervisors
Transportation	Maintenance Storage Building	Bus Garage Office	Department Directors and Supervisors
Maintenance Buildings	Maintenance Storage Building	Maintenance Building Storage Room	Department Directors and Supervisors

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 will be notified and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed in conjunction with other district administrators
 - c. See the section titled Documentation of Work Hours and Locations for additional information on contact tracing
 2. CDC guidelines for COVID-19 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 Superintendent will be notified and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed in conjunction with other district administrators.
- 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. Avoca CSD will not require sick employees to provide a negative test result for the disease in question or healthcare provider's note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work; unless there is a recommendation from the CDC/public health officials to do so.
 5. 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.
 6. The Superintendent will be notified and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed in conjunction with other district administrators.
- 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.
 - a. CDC guidance for COVID-19 indicates that a period of 24 hours is ideally given 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 Superintendent, or their designee, will 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 will be notified and is responsible for ensuring these protocols are followed in conjunction with other district administrators.

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

NYS Department of Health, NYS Education Department and CDC/public health guidelines are followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and areas.

The district ensures adherence to hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including “Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,” and the “STOP THE SPREAD” poster, as applicable. Cleaning and disinfection logs are maintained that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.

Examples of facility types where cleaning and disinfection frequency will be distinguished include bathrooms; athletic training rooms, locker rooms; health offices, isolation rooms; administrative offices (main office, reception area); frequently touched surfaces in common areas (door handles, elevator buttons, copy machine keypads, etc.); breakrooms; cafeterias/kitchens; computer labs; science labs; classrooms; maintenance offices and work areas; bus garage; buses, school vehicles; library; large meeting areas (auditoriums, gymnasiums, music rooms); playgrounds (cleaning only); outdoor seating areas (plastic or metal).

Employees and contractors are trained on proper hand and respiratory hygiene, and such information. The district provides and maintains hand hygiene stations around the school, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.

- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Accommodations are made for those who cannot use hand sanitizer.

The cleaners and building maintenance mechanics provide regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities, including more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high-risk and frequently touched surfaces and shared equipment. This includes desks and cafeteria tables, which should be cleaned and disinfected between each individual’s use. Cleaning and disinfection is rigorous and ongoing and occurs at least daily, or more frequently as needed. The district ensures regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms are cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.

If possible, employees and contractors clean their own workspace “high touch” surfaces in the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum using district supplies such as disposable cleaning and disinfecting wipes.

Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas are issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task. Soiled surfaces are cleaned with soap and water or a cleaning product before being disinfected. Surfaces are disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface. Staff follow instructions of cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

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. Cleaning staff will be responsible for cleaning bathrooms and all other common areas nightly.
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 product

Employee and Contractor Leave

Provisions may be enacted based upon need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of Avoca CSD, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by Avoca CSD, 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 Avoca CSD to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

The Avoca Central School District will implement the following practices to conduct mandated health screening.

The District will facilitate a daily health screening of all staff. They will be reminded daily of the health screening procedures by email and given the opportunity to complete the screening simply and confidentially. The data collected will be limited to yes/no questions on the potential infectious disease risk factors. Data will be collected under a strict data privacy contract which is in full compliance with NYS 2D Data Privacy laws and HIPPA regulations.

The daily screening will include the following:

1. Daily completion of the screening questionnaire provided in the New York Forward Pre-K to Grade 12 School Guidelines for all staff prior to arrival at school. Completion of screening questions for all contractors, vendors, and visitors upon arrival.
2. Random completion of the screening questionnaire (mentioned above) for students.
3. Daily temperature screening of ALL students prior to entry in the building.

Staff may be required to complete the questionnaire daily. Staff members that do not complete the questionnaire will be directed by their supervisor that daily completion of the questionnaire is a condition of continued employment and that failure to comply with the requirement for screenings would lead to appropriate corrective action.

If a student or staff member has a temperature of 100°F or greater or has a positive response to a screening question, they will be immediately brought to a location designated by the school nurse for isolation and immediate dismissal from school. They must have a negative test or a note from their physician in order to return to school.

Students and staff should notify their school nurse and/or principal when they develop symptoms or if their answers to the questionnaire change during or outside school hours. Staff should notify the school nurse or principal by phone or email. Students/parents should notify the school nurse or principal by phone or email. Students or staff who develop symptoms outside of school or who are excluded based upon answers to the questionnaire must have a negative test or a note from their physician in order to return to school.

In-school temperature screening protocol will include:

- Staff supervision of students who are waiting their turn;
- Student social distancing requirements for students who are waiting their turn;
- Training for staff members who perform temperature screenings;
- Methods for ensuring sufficient supplies for taking temperatures;
- Use of PPE or barriers for staff members conducting the screening

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 Avoca CSD 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, to help identify and arrange for these housing needs the district coordinates with the:

Steuben County Emergency Management
3 East Pulteney Square
Bath, NY 14810

The district employee coordinating this is the Superintendent.

SECTION VI – APPENDIX

C. EMERGENCY REMOTE INSTRUCTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Avoca Central School District developed the following Emergency Remote Instruction Plan to address the instruction of students if extraordinary circumstances prevent students and staff from physically attending school. The Emergency Remote Instruction Plan meets the requirements of New York State Education Commissioner’s Regulations for inclusion in the 2023-2024 District-Wide School Safety Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The NYS Education Department (NYSED) authorized a “snow day pilot” program during the Covid-19 pandemic 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. This program allowed school districts to deliver instruction remotely on days in which they would otherwise have closed due to an emergency.

To give districts greater predictability, in September 2022, the NYSED Board of Regents amended section 175.5(e) of the Commissioner’s regulations to codify this flexibility. Districts that would otherwise close due to an emergency may, but are not required to, remain in session and provide instruction through remote learning and count these instructional days towards the annual hours requirement for State Aid purposes. Instruction must be provided to all students and be consistent with the definition of remote instruction, as explained below. In addition, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, such instruction must be consistent with the school district’s Emergency Remote Instruction Plan.

NYSED also amended section 155.17 of the Commissioner’s regulations to require public schools, BOCES, and county vocational education and extension boards amend their District-Wide School Safety Plans to include plans for remote instruction beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. This gives the public an opportunity to provide feedback on such plans for remote instruction prior to their adoption. The Emergency Remote Instruction Plan must include the methods that the school district will ensure the availability of: devices; internet access; provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities; the expectations for time spent in different remote modalities.

Such plans also require that each chief executive officer of each educational agency located within a public school district report information on student access to computing devices and access to the internet each year.

NYSED additions to section 100.1 of the Commissioner’s regulations define the term “remote instruction.” This definition identifies various ways in which remote instruction may be delivered, but which must include, in all situations, regular and substantive teacher-student interaction with an appropriately certified teacher.

The NYS Board Regents adopted the amendments noted above that became effective as a permanent rule on September 28, 2022. Sections 200.7, 200.16, and 200.20 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education were amended, and became effective September 13, 2022, and December 12, 2022, as an emergency action for the preservation of the general welfare to permit approved special education providers to provide remote instruction in the 2022 -2023 school year on days they would otherwise close due to an emergency and to count such instructional days towards 14 minimum requirements and to identify the ways in which such remote instruction may be delivered. These amendments relate to remote

instruction and its delivery under emergency conditions for students in approved private schools for the education of students with disabilities, state-supported schools, state-operated schools, and approved preschool special education programs. These updated regulations now provide the same flexibility for remote instruction under emergency conditions that was given to school districts. The effective date of the final rule was January 25, 2023.

REMOTE INSTRUCTION

The Commissioner's regulations define remote instruction as “instruction provided by an appropriately certified teacher, or in the case of a charter school an otherwise qualified teacher pursuant to Education Law §2854(3)(a-1), who is not in the same in-person physical location as the student(s) receiving the instruction, where there is regular and substantive daily interaction between the student and teacher.” For the purpose of this plan, remote instruction means the instruction occurring when the student and the instructor are in different locations due to the closure of one or more of the district's school buildings due to emergency conditions as determined by the Superintendent of Schools. Emergency conditions include, but are not limited to, extraordinary adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficient water supply, prolonged disruption of electrical power, shortage of fuel, destruction of a school building, shortage of transportation vehicles, or a communicable disease outbreak, and the school district would otherwise close due to such an emergency.

UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL DELAYS AND EARLY RELEASES

Instructional hours that a school district scheduled but did not execute, either because of a delay to the start of a school day or an early release, due to emergency conditions, may still be considered as instructional hours for State Aid purposes for up to two instructional hours per session day, provided the School Superintendent certifies such to NYSED, on the prescribed NYSED form, that an extraordinary condition existed on a previously scheduled session day and that school was in session on that day (NYSED Part 175.5).

The Emergency Remote Instruction Plan shall identify various ways in which instruction may be delivered, including synchronous and asynchronous instruction. In all situations, remote instruction requires regular and substantive teacher-student interaction with an appropriately certified teacher.

Synchronous instruction engages students in learning in the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher in real time. During remote instruction, students and teachers attend together from different locations using technology. Asynchronous instruction is self-directed learning that students engage in learning without the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher. Students access class materials during different hours and from different locations. During an emergency closing, synchronous instruction is the preferred method of instruction, whereas asynchronous instruction is considered supplementary instruction.

ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY (INTERNET, COMPUTERS / DEVICES)

The Avoca Central School shall survey families to find out who has a reliable high-speed internet connection. A survey conducted in 2020 identified families who live in the district that do not have access. Therefore, remote learning is a challenge, if not impossible, for these students. Beginning in 2023, every student who enrolls in the district provides information on internet access and computer accessibility. All survey information is stored and available in the e-school data system. When students do not have internet

access, the district works with the families to develop a plan to provide instructional materials for them as well as a process for recording attendance and grading. The district works with the community to provide locations where internet access could be used if they are able to use these locations.

Commissioner’s regulation 115.17(f) outlines the annual data collection that districts must submit to SED every year by June 30. It requires the school district to survey families regarding internet and device access at the student’s place(s) of residence. The chief executive officer (School Superintendent) shall survey students and parents and persons in parental relation to such students to obtain information on student access to computing devices and access to internet connectivity. Survey link to come.

District policy 7150 and procedures are followed to ensure computing devices are made available to students or other means by which students will participate in synchronous instruction.

Avoca Central School District Emergency Remote Instruction Plan

<p>POLICIES</p>	<p>The plan adheres to guidance set forth in the following Board of Education policies: 7150 Remote Instruction and Code of Conduct.</p>
<p>INTERNET AND DIGITAL DEVICE ACCESS</p>	<p>The school district provides all students in grades K-12 access to a personal computing device. Devices are distributed to the students during the first week of school. In the event of an emergency, closing provisions will be made to the greatest extent possible to ensure that all students have their device at home for instruction. If an event which may cause closing of school is anticipated and where potential exists for a remote instruction day a message will be provided to the staff and students the day prior to the closure in order to prepare devices to go home.</p> <p>The school district participates fully in the SED Digital Access Survey along with locally developed surveys [Survey link to come] to assess how many students have internet access at home. The district provides internet hotspots to any families that indicate a need for reliable internet to facilitate access to learning at home.</p> <p>All faculty should have an alternative general activity for students in the event that widespread power outages or other disruptions to connectivity occur preventing synchronous connection. If students lose connectivity, then the expectation is they will complete the alternate assignment provided.</p>
<p>PEDAGOGY</p>	<p>All teachers in grades K-12 will use Google Classroom as their primary instructional platform.</p> <p>Several district provided instructional technology software programs are available to support instruction along with a wide array of other resources curated by faculty. Teachers will utilize these programs to</p>

	<p>differentiate instruction, accessing a variety of delivery methods that best suit their course, grade level, and teaching style. The instructional approach may include a combination of:</p> <p>Synchronous “Live” Instruction - Using Google Meet, teachers will deliver real time instruction to a full group or subset of students. Teachers may incorporate asynchronous or project-based opportunities within this model.</p> <p>Teachers will make personal connections with all students during scheduled class times via Google Meet. These connections will allow teachers to take attendance, introduce new content or skills and will allow students to connect with their teachers and peers in order to be guided through lessons, ask questions, and maintain personal relationships. The duration of these synchronous connections depends on the grade level and daily instructional plan but should be the primary mode of instruction and substantial enough to guide learning.</p>
<p>STUDENT EXPECTATIONS</p>	<p>All students will receive information on how to access course material and instruction from their teachers. Students are expected to follow all directions and requests to participate in instruction to the fullest extent possible. During synchronous instruction students are expected to be school ready. This includes being on time for class, engaging fully through video and audio as directed by their teacher, and presenting themselves in a manner that is in accordance with school expectations.</p> <p>All students are expected to practice appropriate digital etiquette and responsible behavior during assigned Google Meet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mute yourself on meets as directed by your teacher. ● Cameras are to be kept on during classroom meets unless directed specifically by your teacher to do otherwise. <p>Students are expected to work in an appropriate setting when participating remotely / on-line. Work places include a desk, table, kitchen counter, etc... Other locations are not appropriate or acceptable.</p> <p>Student dress must be appropriate in all platforms - the Student Dress Code section of the Student Handbook / Code of Conduct applies to students in all platforms.</p> <p>If there are any circumstances preventing full and appropriate participation the student should let the teacher know. As this is a required attendance day, students must fulfill expectations for satisfactory participation as determined by their teacher.</p>
<p>DAILY SCHEDULE</p>	<p>The virtual day will follow the same schedule framework as the HS, MS and Elementary School to which the student is assigned. As with</p>

	<p>all school schedules, appropriate breaks will be included in the daily schedule for students and faculty, including time for lunch. Students will attend all assigned classes at their scheduled time. The method of instructional delivery will vary to facilitate appropriate screen time per age level within these parameters. Teachers must be available for academic support after school from 2:52-3:30.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL: INTERVENTION</p>	<p>Teachers will follow the same communication protocols that are established in school for addressing areas of academic or behavioral need. This includes a combination of email, phone calls, and academic/behavioral referrals to the administration. All effective strategies should be accessed to maintain effective communication.</p>
<p>SPECIAL SERVICES</p>	<p>School districts are required to implement support services and accommodations, as indicated in students' IEPs or 504 Accommodation Plans, to the best of their ability.</p> <p>Special education teachers who provide ICT, CT (direct/indirect) will initiate outreach to their students' general education teacher(s) to collaborate on instructional modalities and any necessary accommodations or modifications required of assignments or assessments for the day. When a general education teacher is working with students synchronously, the special education teacher will participate in the lesson.</p> <p>Special education teachers who teach resource room, self-contained special classes (12:1:1, 8:1:1, and 15:1) should follow the same guidance and expectations as classroom teachers in regard to pedagogy, content, class meetings, and flexibility.</p> <p>Teacher aides are available for instructional support by way of participating in class meetings, keeping up on classroom assignments and expectations, and serving as additional academic support.</p> <p>Related service providers are to provide "tele-therapy" services, to the best of their ability. Related service providers are expected to adhere to similar guidelines as other professionals in regard to student and teacher work at home, communication, and flexibility and they will use the students' IEPs to determine an appropriate/reasonable level of communication and support.</p> <p>Documentation Requirements: Special education personnel are expected to document all support and services provided to students during this time. Document the manner, means, duration of time, follow up efforts, etc. IEP progress monitoring is required to be collected and reported to parents following the schedule listed on students' IEPs. Medicaid session notes continue to be a requirement for eligible related service providers. Special education</p>

	<p>teachers/service providers are responsible to hold any virtual professional meetings already scheduled on a day that becomes a virtual instruction day.</p> <p>NYSED recognizes that there may be limitations to implementing certain services or accommodations through remote instruction and as a result, encourages districts to apply a “lens of reasonableness” to their approach.</p>
<p>NON- INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TRANSPORTATION ● FOOD SERVICE ● MAINTENANCE ● CUSTODIAL ● CLERICAL/ ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT 	<p>When a school district is in remote session, non-instructional services may still be required to report to work to perform critical services related to their area of expertise. In the event that the change to remote instruction is due to a snow or other weather emergency, such change will likely impact transportation and other critical services. Decisions whether or not non-instructional employees should report to work will be made and communicated in real time by the appropriate supervisor or administrator based on whether services can be provided in a safe and efficient manner.</p>

INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS FOR STATE AID AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to Section 175.5 of Education Law the school district may decide to transition to remote instruction in the event emergency conditions dictate the closure of the K through Grade 12 facilities. Under the provisions of New York State Education Law and the district Emergency Remote Instruction Plan any instruction sessions provided during the closure of the school facilities are counted towards annual hour requirements for meeting 180 days required for State financial aid.

Annual Hourly Requirements for the purpose of apportionment of State Aid (for districts receiving foundation aid) are noted below:

- 900 instructional hours for pupils in full-day kindergarten and grades one through six
- 990 instructional hours for pupils in grades seven through twelve

The district estimates the number of instructional hours it intends to claim for State Aid purposes for each day spent in remote instruction due to emergency conditions from a minimum of 1 remote instruction day due to emergency conditions, up to the full year’s annual hourly requirement.

REPORTING IMMEDIATELY

Whenever a school building must close to instruction due to the activation of its District-Wide School Safety Plan or Building-Level Emergency Response Plan, a Report of School Closure must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by the School Superintendent as required under CR 155.17(f) via the NYSED Report of School Closure portal. Even when remote instruction is provided during an emergency closure, a Report of School Closure must be submitted. This also applies when

instruction can be delivered in an interim location or via another instructional modality.

When it is determined that it is safe to re-open a school building after an emergency closure, the School Superintendent must notify the Commissioner by completing a corresponding Report of School Re-Opening, via the NYSED Report of School Re-Opening portal.

The Report of School Closure is intended to provide immediate notification to the Commissioner regarding an emergency closure. The Report of School Re-Opening notifies the Commissioner of the re-opening and also collects the actual duration of the closure, the location and modality of instruction, and detailed information that may not have been available at the time of the closure.

Reasons for building closures may include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, power outages, instances of infectious disease, extraordinary adverse weather conditions and threats of violence. It is no longer required to submit a Report of School Closure for routine snow days.

ANNUALLY BY JUNE 30TH

The School Superintendent shall notify the NYSED Commissioner of the results of the survey on student access to computing devices and access to internet connectivity through the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) every year by June 30th.

END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

The school district shall report the Emergency Remote Instruction Plan through the State Aid Management System at the end of the school year. After the close of the school year starting with the ending of 2023-2024, the School Superintendent reports remote instructional days under emergency conditions through the State Aid Management System and certifies this at the time NYSED's Form A is submitted as part of other required certifications. Using the NYSED prescribed form, the School Superintendent certifies to NYSED:

- That an emergency condition existed on a previously scheduled session day and that the school district was in session and provided remote instruction on that day;
- How many instructional hours were provided on such session day; and
- Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, that remote instruction was provided in accordance with the district's Emergency Remote Instruction Plan.

BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL

As part of the District-Wide School Safety Plan, the school district's Board of Education shall make the Emergency Remote Instruction Plan available for public comment and public hearing for no less than thirty days (30) prior to adoption. The plan must be adopted as part of the District-Wide School Safety Plan annually prior to September 1st and posted on the district website in a conspicuous location.