A REPORT BY

The Westchester County School Safety Commission

CREATING SAFER SCHOOLS

September 2019

A Report from the

Westchester County School Safety Commission

Creating Safer Schools

Recommendations to Strengthen and Enhance

Prevention, Planning and Response to School Violence

September 18, 2019

Table of Contents

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Executive Summary

SCHOOL VIOLENCE: AN OVERVIEW

Month after month, we hear about another violent attack in an American school. The news washes over us with a torrent of emotion, and then, the next day, we move onto something else. However, we cannot become inured to this violence. We must remain ever vigilant. While the topic of school safety must remain a focal point of our national conversation, it needs to be addressed at the local level.

At the start of the 2018-2019 school year, Westchester County District Attorney Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr., in collaboration with County Executive George Latimer, formed the Westchester County School Safety Commission, composed of leaders representing schools, educators, mental health experts and law enforcement professionals throughout Westchester County. The Commission is tasked with enumerating and sharing best practices to keep students, faculty, staff and community members safe while in and near Westchester schools.

Why do we focus on school safety when anyone, anywhere, in any public place such as a mall, a concert hall or sporting arena, could fall victim to gun violence? First, our students are our children. They are collectively the most vulnerable among us. We send them to school each day wanting to believe they are safe inside the walls of our school buildings under the watchful eyes of professionals who care for them *in loco parentis.*

For the District Attorney's Office, school leaders and local law enforcement, the fear that someone may take advantage of our youth and small children at a time when they should only be concerned with the next school bell, what teachers are teaching or what their friends are doing is chilling. We are parents, aunts, uncles, friends, community members, too. We collectively and individually want to keep our children safe from harm.

DA Scarpino explains, "Whether targeted by students, former students, former employees or an individual out to make a statement, it is important for schools to be prepared for any event that might put the safety of students and staff at risk." In his opening remarks at the Commission's first meeting Sept. 18, 2018, he told the attendees, "This is what keeps me up at night–what happens when someone bent on violence enters one of our schools?"

CE Latimer echoes these concerns. "County officials are continually working to ensure the safety of all of our schools. This Commission, a joint effort between my Administration and DA Scarpino, is tasked with finding solutions which meet the needs of all parties involved by both

keeping our children safe while also making sure schools are places where our kids feel at ease and can focus on learning. That is why these efforts and those undertaken by our County Police, including constantly working to be prepared through communication and training for any type of horrific incident, are so important."

WESTCHESTER'S UNIQUE CHALLENGES

Nearly 1 million people live in Westchester's six cities, 15 towns and 22 villages. We border the nation's most-populated city–New York–and, right on that city line, are the state's fourth and eighth largest cities–Yonkers and Mount Vernon.

When it comes to responding to threats and incidents, Westchester has unique challenges. The county is comprised of 43 local police departments, and served by the Westchester Department of Public Safety and New York State Police, as well as other state and federal law enforcement agencies. Police departments, outside of the cities, often overlap with more than one group of first responders with different boundaries for fire districts, professional and volunteer ambulance corps, and other emergency teams. Compound that by 40 public school districts, which do not necessarily follow town boundaries, and the number of campuses, which are not under the auspices of a district, such as private schools of all levels, including colleges and universities. In all, Westchester is home to:

- 40 school districts
- 258 public schools, elementary, middle and high
- 122 private schools, elementary, middle and high
- Approximately 32+ professional schools, colleges and graduate schools, some with multiple locations

Our children walk to neighborhood schools, take short bus rides to local public schools, and may travel for an hour or more each way to private schools. They are away from home for many hours each day, in some cases dawn to dusk, and often in the evenings for extracurricular activities. The responsibility to protect our students does not end with the final bell.

WESTCHESTER
BY THE NUMBERS

- 43 police agencies
- 41 local courts
- 6 cities
- 15 towns
- 22 villages
- 40 school districts
- 258 public schools
- 122 private schools
- 32+ professional schools, colleges & graduate schools

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS IN AMERICA

As the 20th anniversary of Columbine approached in April 2019, The Washington Post calculated that in K-12 schools alone, in the two decades since the Columbine massacre, more than 223,000 children have been exposed to gun violence during classroom hours. The litany of nationally publicized attacks rings all too familiar, starting with Columbine H.S. in 1999 (though there were earlier mass shootings), Virginia Tech in 2007, Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, Margery Stoneman Douglas H.S. in Parkland, Florida in 2018, Santa Fe (NM) High School in 2018, and others.

However, school shootings are not limited to those characterized as "mass shootings." In a more recent interactive report published by CNN in July, the authors noted in the same 10 years, on K-12 campuses at least 177 schools experienced a shooting, some during school hours, some after hours. Some involved a few students, some involving many. Some were carried out by outside attackers, others were disputes among students who knew each other. All of them frightening and maybe preventable. Those numbers do not include students killed or injured on college campuses in the same time frame. Perhaps the most sobering number from the CNN database is the number of children and adults killed and injured in a given year on school grounds. The highest tally was in 2018: 37 dead. 68 injured. One other fact stands out: over the 10 years in the study, *the most deadly mass shootings were in suburban schools.*

Since the Columbine anniversary in April, Americans have seen more school shootings taking the lives of students in at least one college and a K-12 school campus. In both cases, at the University of North Carolina (April 30, 2019) and STEM Schools Highland Ranch in Colorado (May 7, 2019), only miles from Columbine, young people lost their lives. In both cases, it was students, armed with guns, who killed other students. Ultimately, it was also students who lost their lives as heroes trying to stop the shooter in the act. One thing that stands out in this latest Colorado shooting, parents say there were red flags regarding both the shooter and issues at the school. In Parkland, according to reports, community members say the shooter showed many signs of leaning toward violence. The same can be said in other tragedies.

While mass shootings grab headlines and affect the most students by numbers, many deaths and injuries occur when a fight spills over between people who know each other. These instances may stem from gang warfare or domestic violence issues which find their way into the school day. Everytown also noted:

> The majority of incidents of gun violence in elementary, middle and high schools — 56 percent — are homicides, assaults and mass shootings. Everytown identified only three mass shootings — incidents where a shooter **killed four or more people** — in an elementary, middle, or high school between 2013 and 2018. Far more common were

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

incidents involving specific individuals, arguments that escalated, acts of domestic violence, parking lot altercations, and robberies where the school was an unfortunate backdrop."

IN NEW YORK STATE

In August, the NYS Comptroller's Office published the New York State School Safety report, a statewide and regional review. It states, in the 2017-2018 school year, there were more than 32,000 reported incidents of violent and disruptive behavior in the state's public schools. The report does not focus on gun violence but on many forms of disruption. It notes:

> "The types of incidents reported varied considerably by region. Downstate, New York City's most frequently reported incidents were assault, sexual offenses and weapons possession, while the Long Island and Mid-Hudson regions' schools had a much larger proportion of drug and alcohol incidents."

It also reports that millions of dollars are spent annually on security and other safety measures. The data in the detailed study is informative but limited since of the 400-plus schools in Westchester County, approximately 150 of them are private schools and are not counted in this study.

HERE AT HOME

Perhaps it was the senseless killings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in nearby Newtown, Connecticut that rocked us here in Westchester because it was too close to home. Twenty first-graders and six adults, one of whom, a teacher, had grown up in Westchester and was laid to rest here, were murdered by a former student. Adam Lanza was a troubled young man, only in his twenties, still living at home in an upscale suburban development, who entered the school and fired his gun at small children (and killed his mother the same day). That memory lingers and its terror throws a shadow from Connecticut to Westchester.

Now, our mantra is simple: *this cannot happen here*.

Since the horrific attacks of 9/11 and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, the phrase "if you see something, say something" is now ingrained in our psyche but should not be reduced to a hackneyed adage. In fact, it is one of the strongest tools we have to keep our kids safe.

The Westchester Intelligence Center reported a handful of threats to schools during the 2018-2019 school year. Threats were made via posts on social media, bomb-threat calls, and in one case, suspicious activity by a student was monitored closely. While these incidents were deemed ultimately to be "not credible," they initially were taken seriously and investigated by

schools and local police. In some cases, schools were placed on lockdown or lockout* until police and officials cleared the buildings. In all cases, the safety of students came first.

So before a more serious incident occurs here, this report will layout recommendations collated from research, as well as the knowledge and experience of educators, mental health experts, law enforcement leaders, first responders, parents and students whose only focus is the safety and security of the children and young adults of Westchester as well as the faculty and staff who educate them.

THE COMMISSION

The Commission was formed in August 2018 followed by a launch meeting with stakeholders representing school districts, PTA, law enforcement, mental health experts, students and community leaders held Sept. 18, 2018, where the attendees agreed to create two Committees:

- Threat Prevention and Intervention
- Crisis Management/Law Enforcement

County Executive George Latimer brought experts to the table who could contribute important and varied experience to the issues surrounding school safety. The expectation was that the members would not only contribute to the Commission's findings and recommendations but would act as liaisons to their constituents to create a broad two-way communication as the outcomes were formulated and ultimately published.

The Threat Prevention Committee consists of stakeholders within the broader Westchester County community in a variety of areas including education, law enforcement, mental health, advocacy, community-based organizations, student representation and government.

The Crisis Management/Law Enforcement Committee is a multidisciplinary group, consisting of representatives from 13 Westchester County law enforcement agencies (large, medium and small agencies), two representatives from campus police/security departments, and one current and one former school safety representative.

Over the course of the following months the committees focused on distinct issues. On Feb. 27, 2019, the two committees met jointly to share their preliminary findings with each other and the District Attorney and the County Executive's Office. From there they planned their final committee work, deadline for recommendations and plans to distribute their findings and activate planning.

Overview: Commission Goals

The Commission goal is simple: to work together to create safer schools in Westchester County. The overall finding of the Commission, reflected in the membership, is that a wide group of stakeholders and multiagency specialists needs to work closely together to keep our schools–and by extension our children, young adults and the community surrounding them–safe from violence of any kind.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS
- Create safer schools by outlining a comprehensive school violence prevention, planning and response across districts including private schools, colleges and universities.
- Create circles of communication among stakeholders, including school building administration, school districts, mental health professionals, law enforcement and other first responders, parents, students and community members.
- Adopt a schoolwide systems approach to threat prevention in all schools.
- Enhance relationships between local police and schools and set guidelines for law enforcement to follow concerning commitment, planning and response.

In these recommendations, we are taking into account guidelines and recommendations which address school security published by federal agencies including the US Secret Service and Homeland Security and national advocacy groups such as Everytown (Against Gun Violence) and Giffords (Originally named Americans for Responsible Solutions), among others. We have also included *The New York State Guide to Emergency Response Planning* listing the laws of New York State. It includes templates for school administrators to use, which each public school must fill out and submit to authorities annually.

We are not reinventing the wheel, we are just taking into consideration the unique intersections of school districts, private schools and first responders here in Westchester, and putting together not only an outline on paper but a team to use as a resource as schools focus on this increasing risk to the safety of our children. *Links to supporting or original materials from these organizations can be found in the Appendix under Resources.*

KEY COMPONENTS:
Prevention and Planning

Create a school and community environment that does not tolerate violence and where schools can be a safe haven. This is a lofty goal but a valuable point from which to begin. Beyond that, prevention is important. Be vigilant. Make prevention and planning a #1 goal for every school

community. A key component of prevention is teacher and student training, drills with law enforcement and first responders, as well as community involvement and awareness.

Communications

Communications–implementation and planning– is fundamental. It begins with educating students of every age, personnel and the greater community in active ways to prevent violence by reinforcing "*If you see something, say something.*" There needs to be a mechanism to communicate what you "see" whether it's a package left in an odd spot, a threatening social media post, or something scribbled on a restroom wall. Who do you tell? How do you let officials know, perhaps without incriminating yourself or putting yourself at risk?

Every school should have a system for anonymous reporting of potential threats to safety, particularly at the middle school to college levels. There are a number of commercially available online-based programs to assist law enforcement and schools. These same types of programs, or other school-alert programs, should be employed to keep all community members and stakeholders informed of actions and events planned for prevention and well as during incidents of threats or active violence. A school or district cannot afford not to have a communications tool which reaches all phone, text and voice, systems of community members, personnel, students and other stakeholders.

In addition, working teams (as described below) need complete contacts among them for business hours and after business hours. This exchange of contact information is crucial to the free flow of information and emergency response among school administration, law enforcement, other first responders and stakeholders. Recent reports show school violence often takes place during after-school hours as well as the school day.

Creating and implementing an ERP/Emergency Response Plan

Perhaps the first step in building a comprehensive safety effort is for every educational building in Westchester County to follow and submit the *NYS Emergency Response Plan* (ERP) each year. This blueprint focuses on preparing a school population for natural disasters, technological failures and disruptions as well as the threat of violence from gangs and bullying to armed students or intruders. Currently, state law only requires public school buildings to submit this plan, but the state encourages all to do so. The ERP becomes a building block for all effective emergency planning to follow. *Details on creating and using this plan are outlined further in this report.*

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Creating and implementing TAT/School Threat Assessment Team

A key component in school safety is the establishment of a multidisciplinary school Threat Assessment Team, known as TAT. Permanent members of the team include school administrators, mental health/counseling professionals, School Resource Officer (SRO)* or police-school liaison. *Details on creating and using this plan are outlined further in this report.*

Creating and implementing ERT/Emergency Response Team

A school Emergency Response Team (ERT) is responsible for the safety of students and staff during dangerous situations. Emergency situations like hurricanes, earthquakes, medical emergencies and active shooters, are examples of situations that pose an immediate threat. Emergencies, whether natural disasters or man-made, come on suddenly and unexpectedly.

In addition to members of the TAT, the ERT should include key facilities and operations employees. Their knowledge of buildings and grounds make them invaluable in case of an emergency. In addition, experts in school transportation should be an integral part of the team. This important team composition is outlined in the *NYS Guide to Emergency Response Planning*.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

PART 1: Threat Prevention and Intervention Committee Recommendations

Goal #1: Review and assess current findings related to school safety and threat prevention and interventions.

Goal #2: Prepare a list of recommendations and best practices that can be implemented by schools, in partnership with other key stakeholders, to enhance school threat prevention and intervention efforts.

The findings of the School Safety Commission Threat Prevention and Intervention Committee suggest there are productive actions that educators, law enforcement officials and community-based stakeholders can pursue in response to the problem of targeted school violence.

In preparing the recommendations, the committee was influenced by several national studies. One of them includes the *National Safe School Initiative.* It highlights 10 key findings which helped shaped the report.
- Incidents of targeted violence at school rarely were sudden, impulsive acts.
- Before the incidents, other people knew about the attacker's idea and/or plan to attack.
- Most attackers did not threaten their targets directly before advancing the attack.
- There is no accurate or useful "profile" of students who engaged in targeted school violence.
- Most attackers engaged in some behavior before the incident that caused others concerns or indicated a need for help.
- Most attackers had difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures. Moreover, many had considered or attempted suicide.
- Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted or injured by others before the attack.
- Most attackers had access to and had used weapons before the attack.
- In many cases, other students were involved in some capacity.
- Despite prompt law enforcement responses, most shooting incidents were stopped by means other than law enforcement intervention.

Based on meetings and research conducted, the School Safety Commission Threat Prevention and Intervention Committee offer the following recommendations.

1. A comprehensive **schoolwide systems approach** that addresses violence prevention strategies for all individuals within the school community.
2. As part of a schoolwide systems approach, implementation of a comprehensive **school threat assessment team**.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

<u>**Recommendation #1:**</u> A comprehensive **schoolwide systems approach** that addresses violence prevention strategies for all individuals within the school community. The schoolwide systems framework includes a three-tiered approach that utilizes specific evidence-based and/or best practice interventions based on data-driven decision-making and effective use of resources.

Tier 1 includes universal, proactive strategies which promote school safety, education, awareness and positive communication and promotes a sense of connectedness for all students and staff. Tier 1 strategies include:

- Opportunities to promote positive school culture and teach, model, practice and reward clear messaging on expected behaviors. <u>Schoolwide Positive Behavior and Supports,</u> or a similar model, which promote a systems-wide approach to addressing behavior social/emotional wellness and risk/safety focus, are recommended. The model should utilize data-driven decision-making and best practice interventions to direct efforts and resources.

- Opportunities within school environment to promote and build sense of connectedness between students and staff.

- Create a school climate that empowers students (and staff) to "*see something, say something.*" This includes promoting safe and open communication that encourages sharing of concerns and importance of helping classmates in need.

- Create schoolwide awareness and education opportunities which promote emotional and social wellness. Examples of training include Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, Co-Occurring Disorder Awareness (CODA), <u>Mindfulness in Schools</u>, <u>SafeTalk suicide prevention training</u>, crisis intervention, resilience and trauma informed care.

- Promote protective factors within school environment. This includes sports, arts, music, socialization, volunteer causes, civic engagement and other vocational opportunities.

- Establish comprehensive networking system to support a comprehensive school violence prevention strategy that includes parents, students, school staff, law enforcement officials and key community stakeholders.

- Use of technology to support effective communication; create opportunities for education and discussions; create effective anonymous reporting systems; and establish formal contacts with outside agencies and other school districts to promote effective communication, partnerships and resource sharing.

- Provide appropriate, proactive opportunities and tools to help students "self-regulate" behavior when needed. Teach and support the use of mindfulness activities. For example, begin class with breathing exercises or identifying a "Zen den" in a classroom.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

- Provide training for all districtwide administrators, educators and other appropriate school personnel on the referral process to the Committee on Special Education (CSE)* to address a student's need for services covered under the <u>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</u> (IDEA)* including, but not limited to, evaluations and appropriate supports.

- Publish and foster a school Code of Conduct that is clear on expected behaviors and solution focused. It should include corrective actions which are aligned with the mission of supporting student growth and school safety.

Tier 2 includes target strategies which address a small cohort of students who require high efficiency, rapid response and "check-in/checkout" intervention. Tier 2 strategies include:

- Use of existing school-based structures to address identified student needs and concerns. Use of Instructional Support Team (IST), Behavior Skills Training (BST), Child Study Team (CST) process and referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE).*

- Use of Restorative Practices to address behaviors that require "corrective response." Establish Restorative Practice approaches.

- Address issues of absenteeism before it becomes a chronic issue. Use effective identification and interventions that support addressing absenteeism.

- Use evidence-based practices for identified students who need occasional adult interaction and reassurance. Use of best practice models such as mentoring, buddy system, check-in/checkout and mentoring.

Tier 3 includes intensive "wraparound" interventions *for students with more complex needs* which require use of data-driven interventions and, at times, community supports and services. Focus is on individualized, assessment-based, intensive, durable procedures and expertise in risk/safety assessment. Tier 3 strategies include:

- Create capacity to facilitate school-based wraparound in school buildings.

- Partner with community providers for support and services. Develop relationships with community stakeholders and engage in student wraparound planning process.

- Partner with CSE to address and provide appropriate supports to address the behavioral, academic, social and emotional needs of students with special education needs as mandated under the IDEA.* Including but not limited to counseling, Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP).*

- In disciplinary matters including, but not limited to, suspensions and truancy, consider whether a referral to the CSE or additional interventions/support services are needed if the student is already identified as a student with special education needs.

Recommendation #2: A Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

We recommend the establishment of school-level or district-level Threat Assessment Teams or, minimally, a formalized threat assessment process that includes school administrators, mental health professionals and local law enforcement representatives.

A threat assessment team (TAT) is a multidisciplinary team that meets on a regular basis to identify, discuss and develop mitigation plans for threats within the school community. The team should consist of multiple stakeholders who have knowledge of the student in question.

A team leader, preferably someone from school administration, must be designated. The team must include, but is not limited to, the following three roles:

- School administrator(s) (i.e., Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean)
- Mental health professional(s) (i.e., guidance counselor, social worker, school psychologist)
- Member from local law enforcement (i.e., SRO or the police-school liaison).

Additional roles may be added to the team based on the specific school. For example, a school may add the school nurse because of the knowledge and contact that the nurse has with all of the students. Schools may add *ad hoc* members to the TAT based on the specific student or threat. For example, if the student is on an athletic team, the coach could provide a critical perspective.

The TAT aims to:

- Identify students who may be at risk to harm themselves or others and bring their names to an identified person (team leader).
- Determine whether or not the situation presents an imminent threat and can be handled by school administration and/or mental health professionals through targeted intervention(s).
- Determine whether the situation presents an imminent threat and needs immediate intervention by law enforcement.
- Interview individuals who know the student.
- Review the student's prior history and school records.
- Involve parents/guardians as much as possible and when appropriate.
- Provide follow up on any next steps that may need to be taken.
- Provide ongoing support to the student and family/guardian.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

The team is built on the concepts of:

Communication:
The school or school district must train its staff to understand the purpose and function of a TAT. In each case, it must notify school personnel that a TAT has been established and will be utilized. The school must identify the team members so that all staff know who to report to if they are concerned about a particular student. In addition, they must establish multiple communication systems including:
- An anonymous reporting system for parents/guardians and students who may have a concern
- A definitive process that establishes a point person for teachers and other staff to report concerns
- A central repository where all of this information can be gathered before and during the formal threat assessment
- A contact with outside agencies (i.e., local law enforcement, social services) that may have information pertaining to a student

Behavior and threat identification:
When a student is referred to the TAT, there must be a formal process in place to determine if the student's behavior poses an *imminent* or *non-imminent* threat. This can be done by utilizing a series of <u>Threat Assessment Inquiry Questions</u>. If the behavior poses an imminent threat, immediate action must be taken. If it is not imminent, immediate action does not have to be taken. In both cases, a plan to support the student must be put into place to assist the student. Effectively mitigating the threat by:
- Monitoring
- Intervening
- Resolving
- Referrals
- Counseling
- Discipline

Documentation:
The school must establish a formal manner to document the TAT process. This means they must select or create forms to complete during the threat assessment. This should include information about the student's academics and behavior. They also may include information from interviews that were conducted. All of these documents will be kept in the central repository for future reference. (*See References below at the end of this discussion*.)

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Central repository:

All of the information gathered before and during a threat assessment must be collected and kept in one place. School records, staff anecdotes, contact with outside agencies, and interview results are a few examples of information that should be kept in a central repository. This information will be used to determine next steps and to keep record of how the case is handled.

There are several useful guides to setting up TATs including:

- *Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines* (CSTAG, formerly known as VSTAG) by Dewey Cornell, PhD, is an updated evidence-based model used nationally: The manual is available for a fee.
- The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VDCJS) published a 2016 edition of its comprehensive guide: *Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*.
- Another resource is the United States Secret Service (USSS) operational guide for threat assessment teams: *Enhancing School Safety Using A Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence*

PART II: Crisis Management/Law Enforcement Committee Recommendations

Goal: To develop guidance for law enforcement agencies operating in Westchester County with respect to school safety prevention and response based on collective experience both here and in documented research.

This Crisis Management/Law Enforcement Committee has received presentations on the applicable laws and practices in the County and reviewed prior school safety incidents. The committee has identified what we believe to be 10 fundamental activities necessary to minimize the risks of a significant school safety incident and prepare to respond if there is an incident. These activities have been codified into 10 succinct recommendations with detailed discussions that expand upon each recommendation.

It's important to differentiate between School Resource Officers* (SROs) and police-school liaisons.* An SRO is a sworn police officer embedded in a school. The role of the SRO is to partner with school administrators to create a safer environment for both students and staff. A liaison (as will be discussed further) is a sworn local police officer appointed by that department, as part of his/her regular duties, to act as a liaison between the local department and the assigned school. Specific roles and tasks will be discussed further in our recommendations.

Recommendation #1: Establish a law enforcement point of contact for schools

Local law enforcement agencies shall appoint at least one police-school liaison for each and every school (public and private) within that jurisdiction focused on school safety matters. The police-school liaison will be a member of the TAT and ERT committees (unless an SRO is designated).

> *Where schools lack a dedicated point of contact within their assigned law enforcement agency, communication often fails. This breakdown results in, among other things, a misunderstanding of roles and responsibilities and, ultimately, reduces the effectiveness of both the school and police department. This issue is notably more common in jurisdictions where police departments are tasked with protecting both public and private schools where the private schools do not have the same mandatory state reporting requirements and thus may not be as engaged with their local police departments.*

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

It is this committee's recommendation that every department assign a police-school liaison *for schools in their jurisdiction. This may be a single officer or multiple officers, based on the size of the municipality and the number of schools within that area. The officer, or officers, assigned will act as a liaison between the police department and the school so that school administrators have direct contact with their local police department. In some cases, an SRO will serve as the liaison.*

Police-school liaisons or SROs shall endeavor to build positive relationships with school leaders, discuss roles and responsibilities, and proactively answer questions. In every case, a liaison should be someone well-suited to hear the needs of school leadership and to share those needs with the department. Likewise, they should be capable of evaluating school safety and making recommendations to the administration for school safety training and education of faculty, staff and the student body. Ideally, this person should either be in a position to directly assign law enforcement assets when needed or have direct access to command staff who can facilitate such action.

Recommendation #2: Police-school liaison shall receive training specific to assignment

Police-school liaisons shall receive training regarding role, responsibilities, crisis response, current events, relevant laws and regulations, legal obligations of schools, and best practices.

Before, or within, the first year of assignment, the officers who work as police-school liaisons should be trained to build relationships in the education environment. The skills needed to accomplish this mission come from training specific to school-based policing. This training should build on the basic principles of the role of law enforcement in the school, mentor/counselor, and presenter or guest speaker. Specific topics include legal considerations, New York State Education Emergency Response requirements, handling students with special needs, providing mentoring/counseling, substance abuse, crime prevention and mental health concerns. Examples of credible training include the Basic School Resource Officer Course offered by the State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association Inc. (SNYPJOA) and the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO*).

In addition to the basic training, officers should be appropriately trained to address current challenges facing school safety. Some of these challenges may be specific to the school district or spawned from recent events. For example, there may be gang violence within a jurisdiction that prompts additional training and coordination. Another example could be opioid overdoses plaguing a community. It is imperative to develop a process to identify these obstacles and other deficiencies in a school community and use the information to develop ongoing training initiatives. Such a

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

process may include, for example, an annual survey to capture this type of data which could then be included as topics for instruction in available venues such as webinars or an annual school safety symposium.

Recommendation #3: Establish/maintain training program for SROs

The Westchester County Police Academy shall work with the relevant state agencies, the School Safety Commission, and other partners to coordinate recommended training for SROs.

It is important that the training of SROs is consistent throughout the county and comprehensive enough to meet the current challenges of school safety. For example, curriculum should address roles and responsibilities such as: providing crime prevention programs, assisting with safety initiatives, providing a security presence, aiding with emergency management, helping with security assessments, and participating in behavioral intervention teams. Additional training topics may include: academic organizational structure, public speaking, counseling, handling special needs students, violence in the school, gang activity, creating drug-free schools and crisis management. The Westchester County Police Academy should collaborate with credible organizations such as the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (NYSDCJS), the State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association Inc. (SONYPJOA), and the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) to provide this training at the Westchester County Police Academy. In addition to the basic training, there exist additional training opportunities to enhance officer's skills such as NASRO Advanced and SNYPJOA Advanced SRO curriculum to build on the basic SRO course.

Recommendation #4: Annual review and filing of ERPs

At the beginning of each school year, the police-school liaison, with members of the ERT, shall review the updated Emergency Response Plan (ERP), floor plans, and any associated policies from all schools (public and private) within the local police jurisdiction with the school leadership.

Discussion: Section 2801-a of the NYS education law requires every school district within the state, and every board of cooperative educational services, county vocational education and extension board adopt and amend a comprehensive districtwide school safety plan and building-level ERP. The local law enforcement agency with jurisdiction shall have copies of the plan, including floor plans, and maintain those copies in a readily accessible location.

The Emergency Response Plans must include the following elements:

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

- *Policies and procedures for response to emergency situations, such as those requiring evacuation, sheltering and lockdown. These policies should include, at a minimum, evacuation routes, procedures for addressing medical needs, transportation, emergency notification of parents and guardians, and emergency responder access to locked buildings and grounds during an emergency. [See: **Recommendation** #8)*

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, public schools began submitting their plans via the New York State Education Department Business Portal. A copy of the plan must be filed with the New York State Police and local law enforcement within 30 days of adoption, but no later than Oct. 15 of each school year. The law does not require nonpublic schools to submit their ERPs to the New York State Police; however, they are encouraged to do so. The Commission recommends each school complete and file an ERP with the state and local law enforcement.

Note: If private schools would like to submit their plans electronically they should contact the New York State Department of Education and request them to add their school to the SED Monitoring application. The portal allows the schools to securely submit the functional annex, hazard specific annex and appendix information. The school should develop procedures in the hazard annexes to meet the needs of their specific school situations.

If private schools choose to use private consulting companies, we recommend the company confers with local law enforcement agencies to ensure, among other things, that the same emergency response terms are being utilized. For example:

- *S - Shelter in Place*
- *H – Hold in Place*
- *E – Evacuation*
- *L – Lockout*
- *L – Lockdown*

Note: these terms are defined in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Public and private schools are required to conduct four lockdown drills and eight evacuation drills every school year.

Lockdown drills should be conducted at different times of the day. Four of the evacuation drills should use secondary means of egress to exit the building. Schools are not required to have law enforcement present for lockdown drills; however, we recommend law enforcement be included in one or more of the annual drills.

This gives school personnel and law enforcement the opportunity to develop a relationship before an emergency occurs. This also allows law enforcement to ensure the drills are being conducted properly and provide the school with feedback and possible suggestions to correct any deficiencies.

Recommendation #5: Conduct annual emergency and crisis response training and drills

Annually, law enforcement agencies shall participate in emergency and crisis response drills (e.g., Disaster/Active Shooter) with at least one school in the jurisdiction, alternating schools each year, including other first responders, school officials and other required partners.

We recommend law enforcement officials plan training drills with as many schools as possible in their jurisdiction to familiarize police and other first responders with the layout of the schools in the event an emergency response is needed. School officials and local law enforcement leaders should discuss their various policies, procedures and protocols for dealing with and responding to emergencies.

Westchester County has a Mutual Aid agreement amongst the 43 police agencies in the County, divided into three separate response zones. Consistent with the terms of the Mutual Aid Plan, the local police agency with primary jurisdiction should plan for and train with the other police agencies that would be responding to assist them in the event of an emergency.

Incidents, such as an active shooter event, require not only fast response to neutralize any aggressor, but also require a methodical search after the aggressor is neutralized to ensure there are no secondary threats to students or staff. SWAT teams typically are called in to conduct these searches and to conduct an orderly egress of students and faculty who may have secured themselves in a lockdown protocol. School officials and local law enforcement should discuss and plan for predetermined command posts, staging areas, reunification areas and casualty/injured collections points.

*Command posts: School officials should know that police and fire officials utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) to establish command and control in large-scale incidents. A school official with emergency decision-making ability should be at the command post to assist the Incident Commander (typically a law enforcement official) in coordination and communication during the incident. Having several options for a location for a command post is ideal in order to facilitate a faster set up of the command system during an incident.

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Staging areas: *This is an area where assisting agencies can respond to check in with their personnel and equipment. Having a location off-site near the school where numerous vehicles can park and await direction will facilitate the smoother flow of the response to the location of the emergency.*

Reunification areas: *Upon determining the situation is safe for an orderly evacuation of the school building, an area for students to muster for attendance as well as dismissal to their families should be established. Several viable options should be made available to the Incident Commander for selection. The area should be cleared by law enforcement before the evacuation.**

Casualty collection points: *This is an area where any injured persons can be brought to for emergency triage. Several viable options should be provided to the Incident Commander for selection of a safe area.*

Recommendation implementation: Ideally, this would begin with a tour of the schools with school officials and the police-school liaison. Police portable radios should be tested from inside the schools to check reception and learn how communications may be affected while inside the buildings. If communication is problematic, remedies should be discussed and funded for immediate correction. A discussion should take place regarding the school's emergency policies as well as law enforcement's response and procedure in emergencies. A scenario-based training session with the school and local first responders should be arranged to practice an emergency response to an active shooter or similar emergency incident. A full debrief and discussion should take place with all involved to go over lessons learned and any issues that may have been brought to light. Further, larger scale trainings, possibly with faculty and staff and law enforcement (but without students), should go through the emergency response from start to finish, including setting up the ICS stations. A mock evacuation and reunification process should take place so the accounting of students takes place (this process can be practiced by staff after a regular fire drill so students do not have to see a large-scale police response, but the staff can work through a reunification protocol).

A full debriefing should occur after every training as well as a hard look at any policy that may be need to be modified if weaknesses are observed during training drills.

Recommendation #6: Law enforcement shall have emergency access to all schools

The police-school liaison shall obtain from all schools (public and private) within the law enforcement agency's jurisdiction a master key, swipe card, door codes, lock box combination, etc. for safe keeping at the law enforcement agency to facilitate building access during an emergency/crisis.

Law enforcement should have open discussions and communications with school officials regarding the need to have access to schools during emergencies when time is of the essence. Any impediment to a law enforcement response can have serious consequences. If access is not available, forcible entry would be needed. This would delay police response to the incident.

There are many different types of access systems for buildings and it would be the decision of school officials on what system would best fit their location needs. Whatever system school officials choose, access to law enforcement should be granted. There are several types of locking mechanisms which can be considered: master keys for external and internal doors, an access card system or door code keypads. It's important to note, since some access card systems are disabled when a lockdown alarm is triggered, law enforcement may need a mechanism to override the lockdown.

Additionally, master keys could be given to the local law enforcement agency by school officials. These keys would not only allow access into the building, but also access to the different classrooms within a school. If schools do not want to make available a master key for every patrol vehicle, schools can install a Knox Box* by entrances to schools.

For whatever system school officials choose, policies should be in place which explain the chosen system, who is responsible for its upkeep, who would have access to it, and when the system should be used. Once polices are established, school officials should contact their local law enforcement agency to advise what system was chosen and provide necessary instruction/equipment for law enforcement access. Furthermore, school officials should perform annual checks of the system to ensure proper functioning.

Surveillance Camera Systems: Allowing local law enforcement remote access to these systems is a valuable tool in assessing a critical incident as well as assisting emergency services to respond rapidly and efficiently to the affected area of a school.

School officials need to grant permission to law enforcement to access these systems. Again, policies need to be composed and agreements formulated between the schools and law enforcement. These policies and agreements must take into account all federal, state and local laws including educational laws, in particular, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*.

Recommendation #7: Establish school leadership contact list

The police-school liaison shall establish and update annually a school leadership contact sheet for each school in their jurisdiction containing the names, home and cellphone numbers of individuals to contact regarding school safety matters. [Note: this is the same list that should be available to the entire ERT.*]

Changes in staffing, such as promotions, retirements and new hiring can have a significant effect on the communication chain. In order to maintain clear lines of communication, school administration and police departments must prioritize and maintain the exchange of current contact information.

We recommend that police-school liaisons shall establish and update annually a leadership contact sheet for each school in their jurisdiction. This list should include a minimum of three points of contact for each school who should be contacted regarding school safety matters including during an emergency or crisis. When available, the list should contain both home and mobile phone numbers to ensure that someone is always available during a critical incident.

Recommendation #8: Establish clear expectations for when schools shall contact law enforcement

The police-school liaison shall work with school leaders to establish guidelines and expectations for when school officials shall contact law enforcement.

Law enforcement and school officials shall collaborate to establish guidance for the threshold on when law enforcement notification is necessary and who should be notified. It is evident that immediate notification to law enforcement by calling 911 is required for serious threats or acts of violence within the schools. For example, if there is a stabbing or a threat of a firearm. Some difficulty arises when the threat is more ambiguous or the severity of the incident borders on criminal conduct. This becomes a significant concern because no notice, or an untimely notice, could delay the requisite emergency response resulting in physical harm or the loss of life, or it could open the door for liability for violating federal guidance such as the FERPA.

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

There are exceptions to FERPA for law enforcement notification if there is an imminent threat of harm. There are permissions within the guidelines of FERPA to share information with law enforcement before the situation elevates to an imminent threat when certain guidelines are met. For example, an SRO or liaison could be considered a school official if the officer provides an institutional service which would otherwise be filled by school employees, the school still maintains control over the officer in regards to the school records, and the officer abides by the use and disclosure of the information in accordance with FERPA. In other words, an officer on a TAT team could satisfy these requirements and assist the school with circumstances that have not elevated to the level of imminent harm.

There exist circumstances that require a call to 911 instead of a call to the off-site police-school liaison. For example, immediate life-threatening circumstances such as imminent threats to safety or medical emergencies should go through 911. The 911 dispatchers can immediately notify the appropriate first responder agency without adding an additional layer which could cause a delay in the response. The police-school liaison should still be notified after the call to 911. An exception to this would be a uniformed officer physically present on the school campus with a functioning police radio can serve as a direct link to 911.

The school community should be reminded that anyone can call 911 in an emergency.

Finally, the school should have a well-publicized 24/7 mechanism for the school community to contact the school with safety concerns.

Recommendation #9: Conduct periodic walk-through of all schools in jurisdiction

The police-school liaisons shall conduct a periodic walk-through of all schools in the jurisdiction to obtain and maintain maximum familiarity with facilities.

The walk-through should be conducted as often as needed to enhance and refresh the officer's familiarity with the faculty, students and facilities. Introductions or reintroductions to the school community help to build and sustain needed relationships. Being physically present on the grounds provides the opportunity to verify the accuracy of ERP floor plan details, verify that building access methods work, verify the accuracy of the road and the building signage, identify security risk areas and provide recommendations for improvement, among other things.

Walk-throughs also provide an opportunity to test the functionality of communications such as first responder radios, cellphones, the school PA system, facility door locks, lockdown systems, fire alarms and video surveillance systems.

All first responders should have familiarity with the school buildings. There should be an effort to coordinate a consistent rotation of officers from the law enforcement agency and other first responders through the school buildings. These could be less formal walk-throughs, but would help provide situational awareness to members of the police, fire and EMS agencies who would be responding to the school.

Recommendation #10: Enhance public awareness of gun safety

Law enforcement agencies shall promote public awareness of gun storage laws and responsible gun storage practices through public service announcements and community education. We recommend the following:

- *Increase awareness of mandated gun-storage techniques.** All weapons should be secured properly in homes with the ammunition stored in a separate area. Homeowners should conduct regular checks throughout the year to verify their firearms are properly secured. A durable safe or similar type lock box must be utilized. Trigger locks should also be utilized as a secondary measure to ensure no unauthorized use of the weapon. Whenever possible, local municipalities should offer free trigger locks to anyone expressing interest with no questions asked. This will allow for complete coverage of all guns throughout the community.*
- *Providing annual safety tips to gun owners should be mandated. A public information campaign should be launched yearly to provide best practices for gun safety and storage.*
- *Partner with their school districts to provide gun safety awareness to the entire community. Suggestion would be to follow existing awareness programs such as* <u>National Gun Violence Awareness Day</u>*; the first Friday in June.*
- *Gun permit renewals should require a gun safety update along with best practice gun storage. An appropriate and comprehensive examination should also be administered upon renewal.***
- *Amnesty: Illegal handguns are responsible for the majority of homicides and shootings. Individuals who maintain these weapons should be encouraged (e.g. public service announcements) to turn these weapons in with anonymity and amnesty. Rewards should be considered.***

**See Appendix: Publications for updated information of 2019 gun safety laws re: gun storage, undetectable weapons, arming teachers, gun buy-back programs and background checks.

*Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Additional Considerations

New York State Red Flag Law and Other Gun Safety Measures

When a person or persons of any age show behavior that raises red flags about possible violent motives we must act. In New York State, we have been given a law to address prevention and gun safety. As mentioned, one of the things that stands out in the latest Colorado shooting and in Parkland, according to reports, community members said the shooters showed 'red flags' of pending violence.

As of the school year 2019-2020, New York educators, families and law enforcement can take legal action to potentially prevent violence when they spot so-called red flags in a person's behavior, which may indicate future violence. This common-sense gun safety measure became effective Aug. 24, 2019.

A person may report a "red flag" to their local police if the suspect student or other community member posts threats on social media, makes verbal threats or exhibits changing behaviors that appear as warning signs to others. The law, also known as the Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law, through a judicial process, prevents individuals who show signs of being a threat to themselves or others from purchasing or possessing any kind of firearm. According to Gov. Cuomo, this is the first red-flag law in the country, which distinctly empowers school personnel to report their concerns and seek an emergency protection order based on a person's potential actions. Early intervention, such as a court-ordered ERPO, may save lives.

The NYS Red Flag law provides all necessary procedural safeguards to ensure that no firearm is removed without due process.

New York is now one of 17 states and Washington, D.C. with red flag laws. According to EveryTown, an advocacy group:

> "The United States Secret Service and the United States Department of Education studied targeted school violence incidents and found behavioral warning signs that caused others to be concerned in 93 percent of cases. They also found that in 81 percent of incidents, other people, most often the shooter's peers, had some type of knowledge about the shooter's plans.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

For example, students and teachers reported that the mass shooter in the February 2018 Parkland, FL, tragedy displayed threatening behavior. His mother had contacted law enforcement on multiple occasions regarding his behavior, and he was known to possess firearms. In response to that tragedy, Florida passed its own Red Flag law."

In July, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed additional gun-safety legislation limiting an educational institution's ability to authorize any person who is not primarily employed as a school resource officer, law enforcement officer or security guard to carry a firearm on school grounds. The law ends speculation in New York State about arming teachers. Other new NYS laws include gun storage regulations, undetectable weapons, gun buy-back and gun amnesty programs and background checks.

Conclusion

We believe these recommendations, if followed, present a strong blue blueprint for educations, planning, prevention and response to threats and active incidents. As we move into 2020, despite having a comprehensive plan in place, some child or adult bent on violence might slip through the cracks. That is all the more reason to be vigilant and to constantly review these best practices in keeping our schools safe. This is just a beginning and a blueprint to be assessed and reassessed as we go forward.

Defined further in the Appendix: Glossary of Terms

APPENDIX

- Commission Members
- Resources
- Publications
- Organizations
- *Glossary of Terms*

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr.
Westchester County District Attorney

George Latimer
Westchester County Executive

Threat Prevention Committee (2018-2019)

Lila Kirton (Committee Chair)
Bureau Chief, Westchester DA's Office of Community Affairs & Strategic Planning

Michael Orth (Committee Co-Chair)
Commissioner, WC Dept. of Community Mental Health

Brandon Cruz (Committee Co-Chair)
Supervisor of School Safety/Facilities, Southern Westchester BOCES

Adrienne Arkontaky
Vice President/Managing Attorney, Cuddy Law Firm

Dr. Noelle Beale
Regional Superintendent, Catholic Schools of Central Westchester

Amery Bernhardt
Sgt. Westchester County Department of Public Safety

Katelyn Cecere
Student, White Plains High School (Graduate 2019)

Harold Coles
District Superintendent, Southern Westchester BOCES
(Representing NYS Association of Independent Schools)

Lisa Davis
Executive Director, Westchester Putnam School Boards Association

Rev. Steve Lopez
President, Yonkers Board of Education
Former Chairman, Conference of Big 5 School Districts

Walter Moran
President, Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents

Christine Morrone
Elementary Vice President, Yonkers Federation of Teachers

Scott Nelson
Headmaster, Rye Country Day School

Rocco Pozzi
Commissioner, WC Department of Probation

Lisa Scott
Program Director, WJCS Center Lane

Joe Tadrick
Representative, Office of Infrastructure – Homeland Security

Crisis Management/Law Enforcement Committee Members (2018-2019)

Matt Tormey (Committee Chair)
Chief Criminal Investigator, WCDAO

Amery Bernhardt (Committee Co-Chair)
Sgt. Westchester County Department of Public Safety

Kristi Wilson (Committee Co-Chair)
School and Community Outreach Coordinator, New York State Police Troop K

David Atkins
Captain, New York State Police Troop K

Anne Fitzsimmons
Chief, White Plains Police Department

Charles Gardener
Commissioner, Yonkers Police Department

Thomas Gleason
Commissioner, Westchester County Department of Public Safety

Andrew Ludlum
Acting Executive Director, Westchester Intelligence Center

Andrew Matturo
Chief, Scarsdale Police Department

Paul Oliva
President, WC Chiefs of Police Association

Joseph Schaller
Commissioner, New Rochelle Police Department

Brian Schulder
Director of Safety and Security, Yonkers Public Schools

Scott Sullivan
Director of Security, Westchester Community College

Kevin Sylvester
Chief, Ossining Police Department

Joe Tadrick
Representative, Office of Infrastructure – Homeland Security

Dayton Tucker
Chief, NYS University Police Department at Purchase College

Daymon Yizar
Administrative Dean of Students (ret.), Greenburgh Police Department (ret.)

RESOURCES:

Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams: What Risk Managers Need to Know Now
https://www.nccpsafety.org/resources/library/campus-threat-assessment-teams

Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guide (CSTAG) by Dr. Dewey Cornell
https://www.schoolta.com/manual

Eleven Questions to Guide Data Collection in a Threat Assessment Inquiry
http://www.pent.ca.gov/thr/elevenquestions.pdf

Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model from the United States Secret Service
https://www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide_7.11.18.pdf

K-12 School Security from the Department of Homeland Security
https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/K12-School-Security-Guide-2nd-Edition-508.pdf

LivingWorks safeTALK
https://www.livingworks.net/safetalk

National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Advanced 24-hour School Resource Officer Course Outline and Objectives
https://nasro.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/NASRO-ADVANCED-SRO-COURSE-CONTENT-OUTLINE-AND-OBJECTIVES.pdf

New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (NYSDCJS) Police and Peace Officer Training
https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ops/training/index.htm

New York State School Safety: A Statewide and Regional Review
https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/research/nys-school-safety-statewide-regional-review.pdf

National Incident Management System (NIMS) guide
https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1508151197225 ced8c60378c3936adb92c1a3ee6f6564/FINAL_NIMS_2017.pdf

Quick Guide to NYS ERP
http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/documents/QuickGuideEmerPlanningNov2016_final.pdf

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports
https://www.pbis.org/resource/1001/schoolwide-positive-behavior-supports

SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System Access
https://datasupport.nysed.gov/hc/en-us/articles/360022580411-SED-Monitoring-Vendor-Performance-System-access

State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association Inc. (SNYPJOA) Advanced School Resource Officers Course
https://sonypjoa20.wildapricot.org/Advanced-School-Resource-Officer-Course

The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States
https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/preventingattacksreport.pdf

Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines from Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VDCJS)
https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/publications/law-enforcement/threat-assessment-model-policies-procedures-and-guidelinespdf.pdf

"Train with Us" from Mindfulness in Schools
https://mindfulnessinschools.org/train/

PUBLICATIONS:

Articles on Recent Shootings
CNN Special Report: 10 years. 180 school shootings. 356 victims.
https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2019/07/us/ten-years-of-school-shootings-trnd/#storystart

Colorado School Shooting Victim Died Trying to Stop the Gunman
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/08/us/colorado-shooting-victims.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage

U.N.C. Charlotte Shooting Suspect Was 'Withdrawn,' but Motive Is Still a Mystery
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/02/us/unc-charlotte-shooting-grandfather.html

Research on School Shootings
Keeping Our Schools Safe: A Plan to Stop Mass Shootings and End Gun Violence in American Schools from Everytown for Gun Safety Research
https://everytownresearch.org/reports/keeping-schools-safe-plan-stop-mass-shootings-end-gun-violence-american-schools/

The Truth about School Shootings from Giffords Law Center
https://lawcenter.giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/The-Truth-About-School-Shootings-Report.pdf

School Shootings Timeline
https://www.ranker.com/list/deadliest-school-shootings-100215/loganrapp?page=6

Governor Cuomo Press Releases on Gun Safety Laws
July 2019: Gun Safety: Background Checks and Ban on Bump Stocks
https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-legislation-extending-background-check-waiting-period-and-banning-bump

July 2019: New NYS Law Criminalizes the Manufacture, Sale, Transport and Possession of Firearms and Major Components of Such Weapons That Are Undetectable by a Metal Detector, Including 3D Printed Guns; Expands Law to Require That Firearms Remain Safely Stored When Accessible by Children
https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-legislation-banning-undetectable-guns-and-expanding-firearm-safe-storage

July 2019: New NYS Law Preventing School Districts From Arming Teachers And Establishing Statewide Regulations For The Safe Removal Of Illegal, Unsecured, Abandoned Or Unwanted Firearms (Buy-back programs)
https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-legislation-preventing-school-districts-arming-teachers-and-establishing

About Red Flag Laws
Extreme Risk Laws from Everytown for Gun Safety
https://everytownresearch.org/red-flag-laws

Governor Cuomo, Joined by Speaker Pelosi, Signs Red Flag Gun Protection Bill
https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-joined-speaker-pelosi-signs-red-flag-gun-protection-bill

Local News
Westchester Schools Prepare To Protect Children When Classes Resume
https://dailyvoiceplus.com/westchester/westchester-politics/politics/westchester-schools-prepare-to-protect-children-when-classes-resume/774163/

Stopping bleeding from gunshots: Latest in 'scary' teacher training
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/2019/08/28/white-plains-teachers-learn-treat-gunshot-wounds/2139530001/

ORGANIZATIONS:

Everytown for Gun Safety
https://everytown.org/

Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence
https://lawcenter.giffords.org/

Mindfulness in Schools Project
https://mindfulnessinschools.org/

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
https://momsdemandaction.org/

National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)
https://nasro.org/

National Gun Violence Awareness Day
https://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/apha-calendar/2019/gun-violence-awareness-day

New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (NYSDCJS)
https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/

Sandy Hook Promise
https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/

State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association Inc. (SNYPJOA)
https://sonypjoa20.wildapricot.org/

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A plan to help a student based on the results of a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA). At a minimum, the BIP includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs, and intervention strategies that include positive behavioral supports and services to address the behavior. BIPs are crucial pro-active interventions to address emotional and behavior problems.

Behavior Skills Training (BST): A method used to teach students a new skill through the steps of instruction, modeling, rehearsal and feedback.

Casualty Collection Points: During an emergency, this is an area where any injured persons can be brought to for emergency triage.

Central Repository: A place to store information gathered before and during a formal threat assessment.

Child Study Team (CST): A multidisciplinary team providing services, such as consultative, evaluative and prescriptive services, to assist students with academic difficulties.

Command Posts: School officials should know that police and fire officials utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) to establish *command and control* in large scale incidents. A school official with emergency decision-making ability should be at the command post to assist the Incident Commander (typically a law enforcement official) in coordination and communication during the incident.

Committee on Special Education (CSE): A multidisciplinary team to determine whether a student meets the criteria to be in need of special education services and what appropriate programs and services are necessary to afford the student a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The CPSE (Committee on Preschool Special Education) and CSE are responsible for students with disabilities from ages 3-21.

Emergency Response Plan (ERP): A plan containing policies and procedures for response to emergency situations, such as those requiring evacuation, sheltering and lockdown. These policies should include, at a minimum, evacuation routes, procedures for addressing medical needs, transportation, emergency notification of parents and guardians, and emergency responder access to locked buildings and grounds during an emergency.

Emergency Response Team (ERT): A team consisting of key facilities and operations employees who have knowledge of the buildings and grounds, which makes them prepared to respond to emergency situations.

Evacuation: In an emergency, students and staff are required to exit the building because the conditions outside the building are safer than the conditions inside the building.

Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO): A court order allowing law enforcement to remove weapons from an individual who shows signs of being a threat to himself or others. The ERPO may include weapons the individual may not own but has access to, and can keep the person from purchasing any firearms. (See also Red Flag Law.)

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A Federal law (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): An evaluation that identifies specific target behavior, which may interfere with a student's educational needs, the purpose of the behavior, and what factors maintain the behavior that is interfering with the student's educational progress. An FBA team may include general education teachers, special education teachers, professionals such as counselors and/or service providers, school administrators, parents and/or caregivers and of course the student. FBA's are crucial components of a plan to identify proper supports, services, school placements for students with complex needs.

Hold in Place: In the case of an internal emergency incident, movement of students and staff within the building is momentarily prohibited to prevent students and staff from coming into contact with the incident.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): A federal law that ensures students with a disability are provided with Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) tailored to individual needs. The purpose of the IDEA is "to ensure that all students with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living."

Instructional Support Team (IST): A multidisciplinary team providing support and assistance for students who present academic, behavioral, physical, emotional and/or social difficulties so they may continue regular classroom instruction and avoid referral to the Committee on Special Education.

Knox box: A small, wall-mounted safe to hold the master key(s) for a building for use by emergency services.

Lockdown: This type of drill aims to keep students and staff safe from any danger inside of the building. Everyone is moved into secure areas to hide. Classroom doors would be locked but access to the building may still be open.

Lockout: Secures a school building and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school. All doors and windows are locked and outdoor activity ceases, while indoor activity may continue.

Mutual Aid Plan: An agreement among the 43 police agencies in the County in which any local police agency, along with the primary jurisdiction, should plan for and train with the other police agencies that would be responding to assist them in the event of an emergency.

National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO): An association training school-based law enforcement officers to promote safer schools and children.

New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (NYSDCJS): A state department providing direct training to law enforcement officers through existing courses, newly developed training courses and nontraditional methods such as teleconferences, "smart classrooms" and web-based courses.

New York State Emergency Response Plan (ERP): A blueprint to prepare a school population for emergency response during natural disasters, technological failures and disruptions, as well as the threat of violence ranging from gangs and bullying to armed students or intruders.

Police-School Liaison: A sworn local police officer appointed by a department, as part of his/her regular duties, to act as a liaison between the local department and the assigned school.

Red Flag Law: A law to remove firearms from individuals who present "red flag" behavior, or show signs that they may be a harm to themselves or others (See also Extreme Risk Protection Order).

Reunification areas: In an emergency, an area for students and personnel to muster for attendance after an active evacuation.

Restorative Practices: Used in education to foster healthy relationships and promote positive discipline in schools to create safe learning environments.

SED Monitoring Application: A portal allowing private schools to electronically submit their Emergency Response Plans (ERP) to the New York State Department of Education.

SHELL: Shelter in place, hold in place, evacuation, lockout, lockdown

- o   S - Shelter in Place
- o   H – Hold in Place
- o   E – Evacuation
- o   L – Lockout
- o   L – Lockdown

Shelter in Place: Students and staff are required to stay inside of the building because the conditions inside the building are safer than the conditions outside the building. (For example, inclement weather)

Staging Areas: In an emergency, this is an area where assisting agencies can respond to check in with their personnel and equipment.

State of New York Police Juvenile Officers Association Inc. (SNYPJOA): An association conducting training throughout the state of New York for police officers and juvenile justice professionals concerning child safety, juvenile law enforcement and advocacy and support for families.

Student Resource Officer (SRO): A sworn police officer embedded in a school who partners with school administrators to create a safer environment for both students and staff.

Threat Assessment Team (TAT): A multidisciplinary team that meets on a regular basis to discuss and develop support plans for students who are at risk of causing harm, physically and/or emotionally, to themselves or others.