

NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT-WIDE

SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN

July 10, 2012

NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT

DISTRICT-WIDE

SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN

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Niskayuna Central School District

DISTRICT SAFETY COMMITTEE

2011-2012

Co-Chairs

Debra Berndt
Robert J. Panico

Committee Member

Mary Cloutier
Dave Crandall
Dawn Farrell
Stan Fiminski
Wade Fisher
Larry Gillooley
Rebecca Gleason
Debra Gordon
Ron Grastorf
Casey Horner
Dave Hudson
Eileen Johnson
Dale Lingenfelter
John Lubrant
Sean Muldowny
Thomas O'Donnell
John Rabine
Victoria Robbins
Katherine Romans
Laurie St. Jeanos

Representation

Co-Chair
Safety Officer

Representation

School Psychologist
Director Technology
Parent
Niskayuna Police
Administrative Intern
Director Health, Phy Ed
Assistant Principal
Board of Education
Admin Human Resources
Teacher
Board of Education
Nurse
Fire Chief District #1
Niskayuna Police
Fire Chief District #2
Transportation Director
Superintendent Bldgs/Grnds
Student
Student
Parent

OUR VISION

Total Safety in Our Schools as Vital for Effective Learning.

**To guide the Implementation and Operation of an
Effective, Comprehensive, Integrated,
Proactive Safe Schools Plan.**

**To prevent the Occurrence of
Intolerance, Bullying, Harassment, Ridicule,
Threatening and Violent Behavior in our Schools.**

**To promote Cooperation, Collaboration and Teamwork,
To establish Effective School Safety Teams in each School Building.**

**To secure Safety in our Schools
By developing our own Caring and Inclusive Community.**

OUR MISSION

**To Focus on improving the Safe School
Environment of Students, Staff, Teachers and Parents;
To secure a Healthy, Supportive, Tolerant and Safe Area.**

**To Have a Comprehensive
Integrated Program with a Proactive Agenda,
And a Positive Long-Term Commitment;
To secure a Healthy, Supportive, Tolerant and Safe Area.**

**To Foster the Shared Accountability
of Students, Staff, Teachers, Parents,
Administration and the Entire Community;
To secure a Healthy, Supportive, Tolerant and Safe Area.**

OUR SHARED VALUES

To promote the Shared Values of

**Caring, Communication, Integrity, Quality, Tolerance,
Encouragement and Mutual Respect for Each and Every One.**

SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN

Preface

We, the District Safety Committee, believe it is imperative that the entire school community take responsibility for ensuring a safe environment for learning. We must continue to build upon the excellent community connections already in existence to promote a safe and healthy school and community environment for our youth. Our approach is comprehensive and proactive, and requires a long term commitment.

Introduction

This comprehensive Safe Schools Plan is a guide for planning and a framework for action for the schools and community within the Niskayuna district. The plan is meant to be used by building Safe Schools Teams, the District Safety Committee and to be a resource for all staff, students, parents and the community. The plan is a synthesis of safe schools research, ideas from several area model plans, the school community's past experience and was developed to meet the specifications and requirements of the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (Project SAVE) law.

While no plan can ensure against every contingency, the research does suggest that an integration of multiple characteristics does contribute to a safer environment within a school community. This plan identifies twelve component areas which address these characteristics and proposes the establishment of a permanent District Safety Committee and the formation of individual School Safety Teams as an integral part of the process to evaluate school safety. Together, the District Safety Committee and the School Safety Teams form the thirteenth component of the Safe Schools Plan. The plan analyzes which safe schools characteristics Niskayuna currently practices, and makes recommendations for improvements within each component area.

The District is committed to an ongoing assessment of safety, the development of action plans and budgetary requests for improvement, and periodic evaluation and adjustment of the plan.

Goals

To promote and nurture a Safe School environment, the District plans:

1. To provide a planning guide and framework for action to ensure a safe learning environment , including the physical safety of the schools, and promoting best practices to ensure the medical, emotional, social and physical safety of students.
2. To establish a District Safety Committee to monitor and annually evaluate the district Safe Schools Plan.
3. To require the establishment of School Safety Teams within each building, who will assess specific building safety issues, develop yearly action plans, make budgetary requests, and make recommendations to the District Safety Committee during the yearly evaluation of the district's Safe School Plan.

Objectives

To implement the District Safe Schools Plan, the District will:

1. Continually identify research based characteristics of safe schools within established component areas.
2. Evaluate Niskayuna's effectiveness for each of the component areas and make yearly recommendations for improvement.
3. Require each school building within the district to establish a School Safety Team, who will make yearly recommendations to the Superintendent and submit projected budgetary needs, based on an assessment of building concerns.
4. Develop a process and establish a timeline for the implementation of the district's Safe School plan.
5. Require budgetary requests by School Safety teams to be incorporated into the budgetary process.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

1. The Superintendent of the Niskayuna Central School District will form a District Safety Committee, whose membership will be comprised of representatives from: students, parents, community, school administrators, school board, teachers, counselors, support staff, transportation, maintenance, local fire department/ambulance emergency service, local law enforcement and others to be determined by the Superintendent.
2. To ensure continuity from year to year, the District Safety Committee members will serve for at least two years. Members will nominate and elect a Chair or Co-chairs and designate recording secretaries for each scheduled meeting. Meetings for the entire year should be scheduled at the first meeting of the Task Force.
3. The Superintendent will charge all building principals to form School Safety Teams within their school buildings; an existing committee or team could become the School Safety Team. Membership of the School Safety Teams must include a principal or an assistant principal from the building and other members from the school and community as determined by the principal and the Project SAVE law. It is recommended that these teams have six to ten persons.
4. To ensure continuity from year to year, the School Safety Team members will serve for two years with one-half of the members rotating off each year. Members will nominate and elect a Chair or Co-chairs and designate recording secretaries for each scheduled meeting. Meetings for the entire year should be scheduled at the first meeting of each School Safety Team.
5. It is the responsibility of each School Safety Team to use the District Plan as a guide when developing their Building Action Plans. Each year the Teams will need to assemble the information needed to assess the component areas of the District Safe School Plan for their building. Information may be obtained by using one or more of the following: data collection, a school safety audit, surveys, meetings with parent and focus groups, past experiences, and other methods as determined by the group. An analysis and evaluation of the information collected will assist the team in identifying what is in place for each component area and where there are concerns.

6. The School Safety Teams will then use their evaluation to develop a Safety Action Plan each year to address identified concerns. Ideally, the Safety Action Plan would be developed so that the target time for implementation would be the following fall. The focus of the Safety Action Plan each year may be on one area of concern or several; this is to be determined by team members and the school, in keeping with past district experience. Budgetary implications of Safety Action Plans must be submitted by the Principal of each building as part of the annual budget process.
7. Implementation of each school's Safety Action Plan must be approved by the Building Principal, who will keep the Superintendent informed, and , when necessary, seek the Superintendent's approval. It is the Principal's responsibility to see that the approved Safety Action Plan is implemented through appropriate designation of tasks to School Safety Team members as well as others.
8. Each School Safety Team should plan to meet to monitor and adjust their action plans if necessary throughout the school year; a minimum of three meetings is advisable.
9. Each School Safety Team should plan to submit a concise annual report to the Superintendent by May 1 of each year. The report will contain the following:
 - a) A summary of safety incident reports from the past year;
 - b) Experiences from using the plan during the past year;
 - c) A summary of the Action Plan implemented, areas of noted improvement, and areas of concern;
 - d) An outline of the direction of the school's Safety Action Plan for the following year;
 - e) Recommendations for amendments for the District's Safe Schools Plan.
10. It is the responsibility of the District Safe Schools Task Force to evaluate the information from all of the school safety reports, to re-evaluate the District Safe Schools Plan and to make necessary adjustments.
11. Each year's new District Safe Schools Plan must be reviewed by the school attorney and be approved by the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.
12. The approved District Safe Schools Plan must be provided to the School Safety Teams by July 5 for individual building planning purposes.

13. It shall be the responsibility of the School Safety Officer to maintain a progressive record of the District Safe Schools Plan and the School Safety Teams' Safety Action Plans for each year.

14. The publicity of the District Safe Schools Plan shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent and in accordance with the requirements of the Project SAVE law. Individual building Safety Action Plans shall be publicized as deemed appropriate by the building Principals in consultation with the Superintendent.

**NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN**

PREVIOUS TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1999-2000

2000-2001

2001-2002

1999

April	Superintendent forms Safe Schools District Task Force.
April, May , June	Task Force Meetings.
July	Budgetary Considerations. Review by Attorney. Board of Education Review and Approval.
August	Charge by Superintendent to Building Principals to form School Safety Teams.
August-September	School Safety Teams Formed in Every Building.
September-October	Safety Assessments Conducted by School Safety Teams.
October-November	Building Action Plans Developed. Budget Requests Submitted. Building Principal Approves Action Plan Implementation.
November-December	Action Plan Implemented.

1999-2000

December-April	School Safety Teams Meet Individually to Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust Action Plans.
April	School Safety Teams Meet to Prepare Report for District Safe Schools Task Force.

(Timeline for Implementation, con'd)

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2000

May	Safe Schools Task Force Meets to Evaluate District Plan, Incorporating Information from School Safety Team Reports.
June	Revise District Safe Schools Plan submitted for review by School Attorney. Review and approval by Board of Education.
July	School Safety Teams Receive District Safe Schools Plan. Develop a draft Action Plan for 2000-2001.
September	Safety Assessment Conducted by School Safety Teams.
October-November	Finalization of School Safety Teams' Action Plans. Budget Requests Submitted. Building Principal Approves Plan Implementation. Plan Implemented.

Previous Timeline for Implementation of Project SAVE Law

2000-2001

<u>District</u>		<u>Building</u>
September-December	Update/Revise	Safety Team
Revise Plan	December - January 31	
January	Conduct Audits	
February-March	Review & Revise	Plan in accordance w/ district plan
By end of April	Submit plan to district	
Review by Board	May-June	Summary avail. to public
Board holds public session	June	
Approval by Board	June 18, 2001	
Submit plan to the State Education Department (SED)	July 18, 2001	Prepare and send info to
	parents	
Submit plans to Law Enforce/emergency agencies	July 18, 2001	

2001-2002

July, 2001	Public Hearing
July, 2001	Board of Education Approval
July, 2001	Plan Filed with SED, Police and Fire Department
April, 2002	Plan Approved by SED

2002-2003

July, 2003	Updated & Prepared Various Plans, i.e. Bomb Threat Anthrax Lock Out Lock Down
July, 2003	Public Hearing
July, 2003	Board of Education Approval
July, 2003	Plan Filed with SED, Police and Fire Department

2003-2004

January, 2004	New District Safety Committee Created
January-March, 2004	Review and Update District-wide Plan
April, 2004	Review changes with Superintendent
May 17, 2004	Review changes with the Board of Education
June 7, 2004	Finalize changes

2004-2005

June 7, 2004	Public Hearing
July 12, 2004	Board of Education Approval
July 30, 2004	Plan Filed with SED, Police and Fire Department

2005-2006

July 11, 2005	Board of Education Approval
March 1, 2006	District Safety Committee Meeting
March 30, 2006	District Safety Committee and Sub-Committee Meeting
April 26, 2006	District Safety Committee and Sub-Committee Meeting
June 15, 2006	District Safety Committee Meeting

2006-2007

July 10, 2006	Public Hearing
August 21, 2006	Board of Education Approval
August 22, 2006	Plan Filed with SED, Police and Fire Department
February 28, 2007	District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2007-2008

July 9, 2007	Board of Education Approval
February 27, 2008	District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2008-2009

July 14, 2008	Board of Education Approval
March 11, 2009	District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2009-2010

July 13, 2009	Board of Education Approval
March 24, 2010	District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2010-2011

July 12, 2010	Board of Education Approval
February 16, 2011	District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2011-2012

July 12, 2011

Board of Education Approval

February 15, 2012

District Safety Committee Meeting (no major changes)

2012-2013

July 10, 2012

Board of Education Approval

DISTRICT POLICIES

The Niskayuna Central School District believes safety is a priority and, therefore, is committed to promoting the physical and emotional well being of students. This is reflected in district policies which address issues of safety. The cultural and educational goals of the community are reflected within these policies. The policies are evaluated and amended as necessary. A list of district policies that pertain to safety are included in the Appendix.

A. Zero Tolerance Policies

The District supports strong actions, both preventative and responsive, to school violence, weapons possession, alcohol/drug possession and usage, harassment and sexual harassment offenses.

The District must continue to clearly and consistently enforce policies with respect to school violence, weapons possession, alcohol/drug possession and usage, harassment and sexual harassment offenses.

B. Discipline Policies

The District Discipline policy provides a comprehensive framework for the development of individual building Codes of Conduct (see appendix within each building plan.) The consequences for inappropriate behavior and procedures which may be implemented are stated, as are students' rights and responsibilities, in student handbooks and building Codes of Conduct documents. A procedure is outlined for student complaints and grievances.

C. Other Policies

The Student Safety Policy recognizes the District's responsibility to provide for the safety of all students in school buildings, on school grounds, and during school activities. A commitment to student welfare through medical, psychological, social and other support services is a stated goal of the safety policy. Policies address confidentiality rights and the screening of incoming students. A variety of avenues exists for students to confidentially report situations or behaviors of concern. All staff are required to wear identification badges. There is a specific visitor policy established in each building. A general procedure for the reporting of suspicious strangers exists.

The promotion of tolerance is evidenced through the anti- discrimination and anti-harassment policies. The development and evaluation of School Emergency Response Plans and a person to oversee them is strongly supported to maximize safety preparedness and response.

Notes:

- The Board of Education is reviewing/updating all district policies. The District Safety Committee has also made a general recommendation to review/update all district policies listed in this document related to safety.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The District is committed to minimizing risks which impact the interior and exterior physical environment of the schools. This commitment is evidenced by the maintenance of its buildings and grounds to maximize safe conditions. To ensure the best possible safe environment the District employs a School Safety Officer who is responsible for monitoring all of the safety regulations and compliance mandates from the Federal, State, and Local governments , and from the school district's insurance carrier. Safety audits are conducted on a regular basis and compliance plans developed and implemented.

(1) Playground safety is a major area of responsibility; safety concerns are addressed immediately. All applicable staff participate in scheduled drills, (i.e. fire, lockout, lockdown), "Right to Know Training", "Bloodborne Pathogens", asbestos awareness, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) training which is arranged by the Safety Officer. The District continuously evaluates and updates its Emergency Management Plan, which includes the following comprehensive School Emergency Response Plans that are part of the Comprehensive Building Safety Plans.

1. Criminal Offenses, including bomb and anthrax threats, civil disturbances, hostage taking, intrusion, and kidnapping.
2. Natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and tropical storms, thunderstorms, lightning storms, tornadoes, winter storms.
3. Technological hazards, including air pollution, airplane crash, energy supply loss, gas leak, offsite and onsite hazardous materials, radiological incident, and a water emergency.
4. Fire and explosion, and fire alarm system activation.
5. Systems failure, including building structural failure, electrical system failure, heating system failure, loss of building use, loss of transportation fleet, roof failure or leak, sewage system failure.
6. Medical emergency, including allergic reactions, toxic exposure and school bus accident.
7. Evacuation plans.
8. Shelter plan.
9. "Go Home" plan.

Each plan clearly and concisely states the contingency chain of command and the procedure to be followed. Code words for certain procedures are known to staff. Safe areas both inside and outside have been identified, and some staff have been trained to clear areas for safety in the event students need to be evacuated within the building.

Staff Awareness and Training

The District continually evaluates the Emergency Management Plan, making adjustments as needed, reviewing with members of the school community for awareness as appropriate, and implementing training as needed.

SEE APPENDICIES:

- (1) School Safety Audit Checklist

PREVENTION

The Niskayuna Central School District strongly supports prevention programs and strategies which address the physical safety of the school, promote the emotional well being of children, and provide meaningful staff development.

A. Planning for Physical Safety:

The District will regularly identify safety issues through the collection and evaluation of data and through discussion with members of the school community. Plans for special situations have been developed and publicized. Training is organized and implemented in a timely manner.

All buildings within the District have developed Codes of Conduct which will continue to be fairly and consistently enforced. The Codes are evaluated annually.

In addition, schools provide a variety of prevention programs designed to ensure the safety and well-being of our students. Examples include the following:

Elementary

- Drug Awareness Training
- Niskayuna Health Education Curriculum
- Traffic Safety Programs (like Willie the Whistle)
- Fire Safety programs (local fire departments)
- Character education
- Bullying prevention
- Elementary Counseling programming in classrooms
- Peer mediation
- Banana Splits
- Second Step (Pilot Program)
- Family Life

Middle School

- Advocacy
- Peer mediation
- Drug Awareness Training
- Health classes
- Fifth to sixth grade transition
- Study circles
- Banana Splits
- Family Life

High School

- Natural Helper Program
- Health class, grades 11 and 12
- Assemblies/presentations
- Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD)
- High school assistance team
- Drug Awareness Training
- Freshman Health Seminar

B. Staff Training

The District must continue to support consistent training in intentional character development, anti-bullying strategies, anger management techniques, mediation and conflict resolution skills, decision-making skills, and strategies to help children appreciate diversity. The particular need for specific training programs must be determined by each building and reflected in each school's yearly Safe Schools Action Plan.

Areas should include:

- On-going training in the identification of the early warning signs of violence
- Strategies and techniques of de-escalating hostile situations.
- Helping children learn resiliency strategies
- Immediate response roles during a crisis situation and to recognize and intervene in potentially violent situations.
- Training in sexual harassment recognition and response.
- Child abuse/neglect recognition and response.

In accordance with Project SAVE, staff development opportunities will include school violence prevention and character education training of all staff.

C. Emotional and Physical Well-Being

The District is supportive of a K-12 Comprehensive Health Program which includes a variety of components addressing both the emotional and physical well-being of students. Health and safety issues and training are integrated into various curriculums across the grade levels. The supervision of children in a variety of situations throughout the school day and at extracurricular events remains a priority.

The District's K-12 Counseling Program will continue to provide support to students through prevention information appropriate to each developmental level. Collaboration with outside agencies and the development of both student and staff programs to supplement these services will continue to be implemented.

To address the needs of some at-risk youth, a number of Alternative Education Programs have been developed.

D. Communication

Consistently open, and consistently utilized, lines of communication are essential between all participants in the educational process, and are recognized as being an essential component of prevention. Awareness of the importance of communication must continue to be a priority between different groups within the school community.

All staff are continually updated on available community resources related to student and staff safety and wellbeing.

Additional training is provided to help the school community understand the differences which can result from a diversity of cultures, and how to develop culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate materials and activities needs to be provided.

Staff development and training is ongoing; new staff have been trained to help children learn resiliency strategies. The programming for students with special needs strives to address each student's academic, social and emotional needs.

INTERVENTION

The District supports a broad array of intervention strategies and programs which positively impact children, and especially address the needs of at-risk children. Appropriate programs are implemented based upon assessments of existing problems and current research. Strategies and practices exist for specific contingencies. Crisis Response Plans and Teams exist within each building; the plan is evaluated annually and reviewed with staff. The school counselors, psychologists, social workers, administrators, and various building teams work to plan collaboratively, and to coordinate with appropriate community agencies to assist children and their families.

Crisis Response Teams and Crisis Response Plans are designed to respond to emergency situations and coordinate continued actions and assistance. Coordinated response actions with the Niskayuna Police, the Niskayuna and Rexford Fire Departments, Saratoga County Sheriff's Department, and the New York State Police have been instituted. Proactive security measures continue to be implemented with respect to bus safety, school buildings and property, and school events and activities, i.e. the electronic communication devices in areas of the buildings and use of security cameras have been installed.

The District is proactive in staff training in a number of safety areas. Training in sexual harassment recognition and response, child abuse/neglect recognition and response, reacting and responding to bomb threats and to other crisis situations is ongoing. The District is committed to staff modeling collaboration and cooperation, respect for individuals and teaching students not to tolerate intolerance and prejudice. In compliance with Project SAVE, staff violence prevention training will be held annually.

All staff are continually updated on available community resources related to student and staff safety and wellbeing.

Additional training is provided to help the school community understand the differences which can result from a diversity of cultures, and how to develop culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate materials and activities needs to be provided.

Staff development and training is ongoing; new staff have been trained to help children learn resiliency strategies. The programming for students with special needs strives to address each student's academic, social and emotional needs.

Crisis Intervention and Response

The District has developed clear and concise plans to respond during a variety of crises; the coordination and communication process during crises is continually reviewed with members of the school community.

Each building plan contains information regarding:

- Mandatory reporting of child abuse under the Project SAVE law
- Contacting law enforcement about incident
- Contacting parents about incident
- Disseminating of materials on violence prevention

Additional Strategies and Programs

The District is committed to continued research and implementation of proactive strategies and programs which have been identified through research as effective interventions.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The Niskayuna School District believes educators should utilize a variety of teaching strategies in order to address the wide variety of student learning styles and abilities present in the schools. The District also believes that all adults in the learning environment must model respect, compassion, cooperation, collaboration and conflict resolution. These positive role models must exist within the classroom as well as within the school community.

A. Instructional Strategies within the School

The District will promote and recognize the need for a wide range of teaching strategies within the classroom environment. These strategies will correspond to student learning styles. The District will promote and encourage staff cooperation in the learning and delivery of the instructional strategies.

The District recognizes that small class size plays an integral role in learning and in classroom management. Small class size is integrally connected to the options available for instruction. The District supports protecting small class size to promote effective instruction and provide for a secure environment.

The District recognizes that establishing a climate of trust, respect and cooperation is essential to providing a safe and supportive educational program to students. The District provides opportunities for staff to learn a variety of appropriate strategies for providing instruction to students, and for teaching students to manage anger within a school setting.

B. Alternative Education

The District will promote alternatives to the standard educational system to help students with substantial differences in learning styles or abilities achieve success. Alternative educational models will be provided in a developmentally appropriate manner, consistent with the District's Learning Standards and in line with district resources.

CURRICULUM

The Niskayuna School District believes that age and developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to promote safety within the schools and within the community is a critical part of its mission. Therefore, this curricula occurs in the classrooms, advocacy programs, extra-curricular and other programs.

A. Existing Curriculum

The District will regularly review safety curriculum at all levels. The curriculum will promote age and developmentally appropriate strategies designed to keep students safe at school and in the community. The safety and violence prevention curriculum will be designed to include training in the recognition and appropriate response to the warning signs of violence. The District's curriculum will include but not be limited to instruction in:

- Anger management
- Bus safety
- Character Development (1)
- Child safety
- Child sexual abuse prevention
- Conflict resolution
- Emotional health and safety
- Fire safety
- Peer mediation
- Sexual harassment prevention
- Social Skills
- Suicide prevention

B. Climate for Instruction

All curriculum and subsequent instruction shall encourage tolerance and respect for diversity, the use of good decision-making skills, and promote good emotional health practices. In addition, the District curriculum shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.

(1) See Appendix "Character Education Plan"

C. Curriculum Review

Safety education is a concern of all staff and students. Therefore, all curriculum must be reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with guidelines associated with this plan and with other school curriculum. All new curriculum provided in the district shall be reviewed prior to the beginning of instruction to ensure that its goals and practices are consistent with appropriate safety measures and is consistent with instructions in other areas of school life.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The District recognizes the importance of staff development in contributing to a safe environment. The District supports ongoing staff development in a variety of areas which impact safety. Staff are trained to address physical as well as emotional safety issues. The District also believes that all adults in the learning environment must model compassion, respect, cooperation, collaboration and conflict resolution. These positive role models must exist within the classroom as well as within the school community. In accordance with the Project SAVE law, character education, violence prevention and intervention is part of annual staff development.

Staff Training for Physical Safety

All staff are trained in the use of the district's Emergency Response Plan. This includes the District's fire drill, lockout, lockdown, anthrax and bomb threat procedures. In addition, all staff are provided opportunity for CPR/AED training. Administrators have been trained how to de-escalate hostile situations. All staff undergo annual "Right to Know" training with respect to hazardous materials in the workplace, and also "Bloodborne Pathogens" training, which includes HIV and Hepatitis B. Periodic training is done to review with staff how to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect, and the procedure for reporting it. Staff also receive annual training on the prevention and reporting of sexual harassment; training has been accomplished to learn how to prevent or intervene when harassment (bullying) is occurring. All staff are familiar with their buildings Crisis Response Plan and know their role and responsibility when reacting to a crisis situation. The plan is evaluated each time it is used and adjusted in response to staff suggestions. The district encourages teachers to create classroom environments that invite learning, and to establish clear and concise classroom rules, and be consistent in their application. Staff are trained in playground safety to recognize potentially dangerous situations and to intervene and react appropriately.

The Crisis Response Teams will continually review specific details within their Crisis Response Plans for responding to a violent or catastrophic incident and rehearse their roles and responsibilities.

Ongoing emergency response training for all school personnel continues; drills for specific emergencies besides fire and bombs will be conducted.

Staff Training for Emotional Safety

Staff members throughout the district receive training to integrate the teaching of life skills and character development into curriculum and through instructional strategies appropriate to the age grouping.

The following areas are taught K-12:

- resiliency skills,
- problem solving techniques,
- stress management skills,
- anger and impulse control,
- assertiveness strategies,
- peer mediation,
- conflict resolution skills.

STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

The District supports a school environment where adults and students share goals and responsibilities. Through a wealth of opportunities, students are empowered to reach their full potential, to become mature, successful, responsible and accountable for their own actions. Additionally, a number of strategies target those students not reached by traditional methods to expand opportunities for participation, involvement and empowerment.

Student Leadership

The District continuously seeks programs and activities that offer all students the opportunities to have pro-social and professional roles in the school and community. Students are involved in school district governance at each school level as appropriate. The student government organizations provide activities for students and are encouraged to deliberate and take action on issues.

B. Student Pride and Ownership of the Schools

Developing student pride in the schools and a sense of ownership is a constant goal. Student Councils are visibly active and representatives are given opportunities to participate in discussions that focus on important issues. School newspapers, school web-sites, TV stations and station access have been developed to facilitate better communications.

Assisting All Students to Become Empowered

The District supports strategies which positively motivate the at-risk population. The District is committed to and actively supports a Youth Court within the community.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The District recognizes that a positive school climate contributes to safety in a learning environment.

Physical Climate

The buildings and grounds within the district are well maintained and kept clean and attractive to reflect a sense of pride and ownership as well as community support.

Climate and School Spirit

Student achievement is promoted as the primary focus of the school. The accomplishments and efforts of students are valued; each student is encouraged to reach their own potential. A theme within a building or for a particular class is often evidenced. School spirit is evidenced through a variety of avenues, including a number of traditions within each school and the district which are supported by the school community.

The District will continue to seek opportunities for new traditions to increase student involvement, especially activities that would positively impact the at-risk population.

Social Climate

Good citizenship and character are inculcated at all levels through curriculum choices, modeling by staff and counseling techniques. The expectation for mutual respect between members of the school community is communicated and modeled. The staff strives to maintain lines of open communication with all participants in the educational process.

The District continues to support those programs that assist youth with emotional and social development.

Leadership Climate

The visibility and involvement of school leaders, including student leaders, contributes to strong leadership within the district. Clear expectations are communicated frequently to students and staff. There are positive connections between many students, including some who are at-risk, and staff members.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The entire school community in Niskayuna has benefited from the positive relationships formed between parents and the school district. The District believes that parents are an integral part of the school community as is evidenced by the high level of parental involvement throughout the District. Parents volunteer to assist in the schools and with school activities and to serve on school and district committees. The Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) throughout the district continue to provide parents and educators invaluable and creative connections to assist each other. Additionally, they also sponsor workshops and conferences to help parents become informed about educational issues and parenting skills. The District makes a concerted effort to help families become involved in the education of their children. Frequent positive contacts between staff and parents are encouraged. The District is committed to collaboration between the family, the community and the school, who together must accept the joint responsibility for the safety of the children within the community.

Increasing Parental Involvement

The District continues to be responsive to the needs of parents and the community and will strive to make parents more aware of communication channels.

Parents need to be made very aware of the importance of their involvement at all building levels. The message that parental involvement is an expectation needs to be communicated clearly and frequently. Additionally, parents must model compassion, respect, cooperation, collaboration and conflict resolution for our children.

The District will obtain parental feedback on their perception of opportunities for involvement.

Support for Parents

The District is committed to collaborative efforts to assist parents in the educational and social development of children.

COMMUNITY LINKAGES

The District believes that the family, school and community must work together and accept joint responsibility for the safety of the children in the community.

Connections and Collaboration

The District is committed to helping families become involved in the education of their children and strives to constantly inform the public of the many positives in the schools. The District works closely with the PTO's, Niskayuna Community Education, Niskayuna Community Action Program (N-CAP) and other community organizations to achieve this goal. The District supports community initiatives to increase the safety of the children in the neighborhoods. The District has established interagency collaboration to ensure that the personnel and resources of the schools and community-based health and human services agencies are combined to deliver meaningful support to students and their families. The District promotes connections between community businesses and organizations with the student population to provide opportunities for practical real world experiences and to teach responsibility.

The District continues its initiative to implement an intergenerational program to strengthen school community ties and to establish a connection which mutually assists young people and Senior citizens.

Cooperative Relationship with Law Enforcement

Additionally, the district works closely with local law enforcement officers to develop strategies and procedures for various contingencies. Law enforcement officers provide a visible presence when appropriate during school hours and at certain school events.

SAFETY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The District believes the safety of students traveling to and from school is imperative. The District is committed to ensuring the safety of our children as they move to and from school. The District supports parental and community involvement with the transportation process, and encourages innovative strategies to address safety issues for all.

A. Bus Transportation

The District believes in adhering strictly to all New York State Laws, requirements of the New York State Department of Transportation, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the mandates of the State Education Department. This includes the maintenance of the buses, and mandatory emergency bus drills being conducted three times a year. Rules pertaining to student behavior on the bus are incorporated into the discipline policies of the schools. The transportation web site highlights major news, and includes the School Bus Safety rules, including a specific list of items that will not be allowed on the bus. Additionally, to assist with discipline on the buses.

B. Bus Drivers

Bus drivers are carefully screened during the hiring process, and receive all required training to keep current with Department of Transportation, Department of Motor Vehicle, and State Education Department regulations.

This includes some anti-violence and conflict resolution training. All bus drivers are an integral part of the school district staff and undergo a variety of training procedures. Bus drivers are evaluated biennially for defensive driving skills, physical health, driving skills, driving record, written test skills and physical performance testing. All bus drivers are finger printed and tested for drugs as required by law.

The District continues to provide bus drivers with training in alternative disciplinary strategies, including conflict resolution techniques.

C. Non-Bus Riders

The school community must be watchful and aware of the safety issues which affect the non-bus riders, and continue to implement creative strategies to address them. Parents need to instruct their children on the safest route to and from school. Parents, and others who drive their children to school need to be aware of drop off and pick up points that have been established to eliminate congested areas. All who drive to school will be held accountable for irresponsible driving that puts the safety of others as well as themselves at risk.

APPENDIX

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• Component Areas of the Plan	36
• Organizational Structure of the Safe Schools Plan	37
• School Safety Audit Checklist	Referenced
• Character Education Plan Referenced	
• Project SAVE law Appendices – Referenced NYS Safety Contact Information	

District Policies Relating to School Safety

<u>Policy #</u>	<u>Title</u>
8211	Access to Buildings
8120	Accident Prevention & Safety Procedures
8414.5	Alcohol & Drug Testing for Bus Drivers
4328	Alternative Education Programs
5311	Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities
8133	Bomb Threats
8110	Buildings & Grounds Inspections & Maintenance
8200	Buildings & Grounds Management.
8414.1	Bus Driver Qualifications & Training
5311.4	Care of School Property by Students (See 8212)
8123.1	Contagious Diseases
4300	Curriculum
4200	Curriculum Development
4240	Curriculum Guides and Course Outlines
5312.2	Dangerous Weapons in School
5313	Disciplinary Consequences fro Students
9320	Drug-Free Workplace
8134	Emergency Closings
8130	Emergency Plans
8132	Fire Drills
8121	First Aid

District Policies Relating to School Safety, con'd

<u>Policy #</u>	<u>Title</u>
0140	Harassment
4315	Health Education
5424	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Related Disease
8123	Hygiene Precautions and Procedures
8612	Mail and Delivery Services
5470	Missing Children
5450.1	Notice of Releases of Sex Offenders
8115	Pesticides and Pest Management
8140	Prevention of Sexual Harassment
1400	Public Complaints
1520	Public Conduct on School Property
1500	Public Use of School Facilities
5020.2	Racial Harassment of Students
8111	Reporting of Hazards
8100	Safety program
8414	Bus Safety
5330	Searches and Interrogations
9330	Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products
9150	Staff-Student relations
9610	Staff Substance Abuse

District Policies Relating to School Safety, con'd

<u>Policy #</u>	<u>Title</u>
5311.3	Student Complaints & Grievances
5300	Student Conduct
5320	Student Conduct on Buses
5310	Student Discipline
5162	Student Dismissal precautions
5312.1	Student Drug & Alcohol Abuse
5420	Student Health Services
5311.5	Student Personal Appearance Code
5450	Student Safety
8410	Student Transportation
5400	Student Welfare
5431	Suicide Prevention
5460	Suspected Child Abuse
2430	Suspension of Policies
4810	Teaching about Controversial Issues
4317	Teaching about Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco
4313	Teaching about Religion
8240	Traffic & Parking on School Property
8212	Vandalism
1240	Visitors to the Schools
5500	Student Records