This is a recommended policy to consider and combines three previous CABE model policies: Safe and Secure School Facilities (3516), Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness (6114), and Crisis Management Plan (5141.6). These three policies can be rescinded upon adoption of the newly updated 5142, which was last updated to comply with PA 26-1.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

It is the policy of the _____ Board of Education to maintain a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment and to be prepared, as far as possible, to prevent and respond quickly and appropriately to unexpected crises, such as emergencies, disasters, and threats.

The Board of Education shall strive to build safe, supportive, and academically challenging school learning environments in partnership with students, staff members, families, and community leaders and officials. Supporting these efforts, along with ensuring all facilities, grounds, equipment, and vehicles meet acceptable injury and violence prevention standards for design, installation, use, and maintenance, the Board recognizes that sound emergency preparedness planning and response are essential for the health, welfare, and safety of all students, staff, and visitors. All school community members are responsible for doing everything in their power to promote everyone's safety at all times. District staff and students shall be prepared to respond immediately and responsibly to any combination of events that threaten the school community.

The Board directs the Superintendent to develop, maintain, and implement an *Emergency Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan* (**District Security and Safety Plan)** and, for each school, a **School Security and Safety Plan** and administrative procedures that detail provisions for responding to emergencies and disasters. This Plan will articulate the roles of local emergency service providers in crisis preparedness and incident management, which shall be included in the District's Security and Safety Plan.

The School Security and Safety Plan

The Superintendent shall use state-approved School Security and Safety Plan Standards and a School Security and Safety Plan Template to comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and incorporate the National Incident Command System when updating District- and site-level emergency and disaster preparedness plans. Each school in the district, each school year, will develop and implement a **School Security and Safety Plan**. Such plan shall be based upon the standards issued by *the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection/Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DESPP/DEMHS)* and the *School Security and Safety Plan Template*. In addition to preparedness and response, the plan shall provide guidance on recovery from any emergency incident.

In developing the District and School Security and Safety Plans, which include plans for various crisis scenarios, such as fire, bus accidents, criminal acts, civil disturbances, presence of intruders, hazardous material spills, weather-related emergencies, and bomb threats, the Superintendent shall collaborate with local and state emergency responders and local health officials in compliance with state law.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

The School Security and Safety Plan (continued)

The Board, through the Superintendent, shall annually, by November 1 of each year, submit the School Security and Safety Plans for each school to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection via submission to the District's DEMHS Regional Coordinator in the manner prescribed by said agency.

In accordance with state law, all portions of the District's and each school's Security and Safety Plan that are not explicitly exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act shall be made accessible to members of the school community upon request. The administration shall maintain a redacted, public-facing copy of the plan for this purpose.

The Superintendent or designee shall use the School Security and Safety Plan standards and plan templates developed by the Department of Emergency Services, state-approved Standardized Emergency Management System guidelines, be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and incorporate the National Incident Command System when updating district and site-level emergency and disaster preparedness plans.

The School Security and Safety Plan shall be developed within the context of the four recognized phases of crisis management: Mitigation/Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

All crisis response and security drills conducted within the District shall adhere strictly to the following statutory requirements:

1. Written notice shall be provided to parents, guardians, students, and school staff at least seven (7) calendar days prior to conducting any crisis response drill.
2. Immediately at the start of any crisis response drill, an explicit announcement shall be broadcast over the school's public address system informing all occupants that a drill is taking place.
3. Drills conducted when students are present shall not include active assailant simulations, high-sensory elements (such as fake gunfire or loud, realistic audio), or unannounced surprise scenarios.
4. Staff shall provide age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate preparation for students prior to the drill and offer opportunities for reflection or debrief following the exercise.

District Security and Safety Committee

The District Security and Safety Committee includes the Superintendent, Police Chief, Fire Chief, representative of school leadership, teachers and staff, mental health and special education staff representatives, and others deemed necessary. This Committee shall meet each month and fulfill the following tasks:

- Oversee and facilitate the process for the development and submission of School Security and Safety Plans;

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

District Security and Safety Committee (continued)

- Ensure that District and school site security and safety plans address an all-hazards approach to emergencies;
- Assist individual school-based crisis response teams (the School Security and Safety Committee) to include community partners and school-based personnel as specified;
- Develop training activities and conduct emergency exercises, such as tabletop exercises, to support and improve the plan;
- Initiate, build, and maintain relationships with community partners;
- Conduct regular safety, security and hazard assessments;
- Establish and update the district emergency management plan;
- Interview vendors that provide products related to school safety and security;
- Meet with the Board of Education committee that oversees district security and safety quarterly to report on the following:
    - Input related to policy changes and updates;
    - Resources supporting security and safety initiatives;
    - Security and safety concerns facing the District;
    - Updates on communication procedures and protocols;
    - (*Discussions relating to emergency plans may require an Executive Session.)*

School Security and Safety Committees and Immigration Protocols

Each school shall establish a **School Security and Safety Committee** to assist in developing and implementing the school's **Security and Safety Plan**. Such plans shall be based upon the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection standards.

The members of the Committee shall include a *local police officer*, *local first responder*, *teacher* and *administrator* from the school, a *mental health professional*, a *parent or legal guardian* of a student at the school, a *special education teacher*, *the administrator(s) designated to interact with immigration authorities,* and any other person deemed necessary, such as a *school nurse*, *custodian*, *local health director*, *transportation coordinator*, etc. Schools shall collaborate closely with law enforcement, fire and emergency services personnel, and community partners, including public health professionals, to develop a plan that addresses a wide range of crises. A security vulnerability assessment of each school shall be conducted every two years; the results of which shall be incorporated into the school's Security and Safety Plan and reported to the DEMHS Regional Coordinator.

School Security and Safety Plans must be updated and submitted annually and conform to the standards and templates developed by the Department of Emergency Services and the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) pursuant to Section 86 of Public Act 13-3. In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the District's procedures include strategies and actions that comply with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) used by all first responders at all levels of prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

School Security and Safety Committees and Immigration Protocols (continued)

Each School Security and Safety Plan shall include protocols for interacting with a federal immigration authority who appears in person or contacts a school. Such protocols shall be based on applicable law and CSDE guidance, and shall include at a minimum:

1. Designation of at least one administrator at each school responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities;
2. Provisions authorizing such administrator to request identification, ask for judicial warrants, review materials provided, and consult with legal counsel; and
3. Permission for other school personnel to direct federal immigration authorities to the designated administrator.

~~For each school year, each School Security and Safety Plan shall be updated to include protocols for interacting with a federal immigration authority who appears in person at a school in the District or otherwise contacts a school to request information. For purposes of this policy, a "federal immigration authority" means "any officer, employee or other person otherwise paid by or acting as an agent of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement or any successor agency thereto or any division thereof or any officer, employee or other person otherwise paid by or acting as an agent of the United States Department of Homeland Security or any successor agency thereto who is charged with enforcement of the civil provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act."~~

~~Such protocols shall be based on applicable law and the CSDE's "Guidance to K-12 Public Schools Pertaining to Immigration Activities," or any subsequent applicable CSDE guidance, and shall include, at a minimum:~~

~~A. the designation of at least one administrator at each school to serve as the individual responsible for interacting with the federal immigration authority;~~
~~B. provisions that such administrator, or any other school employee, may:~~
~~1. request and record a federal immigration authority's identification, including the name, badge or identification number, telephone number, and business card of such federal immigration authority;~~
~~2. ask such federal immigration authority if the federal immigration authority is in possession of a judicial warrant to support the federal immigration authority's request and, if so, to produce such judicial warrant;~~
~~3. review any warrant or other materials that the federal immigration authority produces to determine who issued such warrant and what the warrant or other material authorizes the federal immigration authority to do; and~~
~~4. consult with legal counsel for the Board, or guidance developed by such legal counsel, on how to interact with the federal immigration authority with regards to the nature of the request, whether a warrant is produced, the details of any such warrant, whether such warrant is a judicial warrant or an administrative warrant, whether the federal immigration authority is claiming exigent circumstances, and any other consideration identified by the Board's legal counsel; and~~

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

~~C. permission for other school personnel to direct such federal immigration authorities who request access to any records, information, the interior of the school building, or other school personnel to communicate with the administrator.~~

(cf. 5114 - Suspension/Expulsion; Student Due Process)
(cf. 6114.1 – Fire Emergency Drills/Crisis Response Drills)
(cf. 6114.7 - Safe Schools)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse and student.
10-207 Duties of medical advisors.
10-209 Records not to be public.
10-210 Notice of disease to be given parent or guardian.
10-220f Safety committee
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
10-222m School security and safety plans. School security and safety committees
10-231 Fire drills
19a-221 Quarantine of certain persons.
52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 45 C.F.R. 99.
P.A. 13-3 An Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety (Section 86, 87, 88)
P.A. 19-5 An Act Concerning the Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home and Firearm Safety Programs in Public Schools
Public Act No. 25-1, An Act Concerning Interactions Between School Personnel and Immigration Authorities, the Purchase and Operation of Certain Drones, Grants to Certain Nonprofit Organizations, and Student Athlete Compensation Through Endorsement Contracts and Revenue Sharing Agreements
``
State Standards:
Connecticut State Department of Education, *Guidance to K-12 Public Schools Pertaining to Immigration Activities* (January 28, 2025)
P.A. 26-1 An Act Concerning Various Provisions Relating to Education, Public Safety, and General Government (Sec. 44-47)

Policy adopted:
cps 1/25
rev 4/25
rev 12/25
rev 7/26

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

A sample regulation to accompany the policy.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

The Superintendent or designee, on behalf of the Board of Education, shall ensure that District and School Security and Safety Plans address an all-hazards approach to emergencies and shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Fire on or off school grounds that endangers students and staff;
2. Natural disasters;
3. Environmental hazards;
4. Attack or disturbance, or threat of attack or disturbance, by an individual or group;
5. Bomb threat or actual detonation;
6. Biological, radiological, chemical, and other activities, or heightened warning of such activities;
7. Medical emergencies and quarantines, such as pandemic influenza outbreaks.

Public Community Access to Security Plans (P.A. 26-1):

Upon request from any member of the school community (parents, guardians, staff, students, or community residents), the District shall provide access to the non-exempt portions of the School Security and Safety Plan. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that sensitive security details exempt under C.G.S. § 1-210 (b)(19) – including specific tactical response steps, physical vulnerability evaluations, building floor plans, and security system operational details – are redacted prior to public inspection.

Protocols for Interacting with Federal Immigration Authorities

~~Through this policy, the Board of Education commits to ensuring that the _____ Public Schools follow all guidelines and protocols established by the Connecticut State Department of Education regarding interactions between immigration authorities and the District. These plans cover each school.~~

Through this policy, the Board of Education commits to ensuring that the District adheres to all CSDE-established guidelines and protocols governing interactions between immigration authorities and the District. No staff member shall be disciplined, suspended, terminated, or otherwise punished for implementing the updated School Security and Safety Plan regarding staff interactions with an immigration authority (P.A. 25-1).

These plans specifically require each district to do the following:

1. Designate at least one administrator at each school to serve as the individual responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities;
2. Specify that this administrator, or any other school employee, may request specific information from the immigration authorities to take specific other actions (see below); and
3. Permit other school personnel to direct immigration authorities to the designated administrator if they request access to records, information, the interior of the school building, or to communicate with other school personnel.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

Actions that the designated administrator or any other school employee may take:

1. Request and record a federal immigration authority's identification, including the name, badge or identification number, telephone number, and business card;
2. Ask the immigration authority if he or she has a judicial warrant to support the authority's request and, if so, show the warrant;
3. Review warrants or other materials that the authority provides to determine who issued the warrant and what it or the other material authorizes the authority to do; and
4. Consult with the school district's legal counsel (or legal counsel's guidance) on how to interact with the immigration authority regarding the request's nature, whether a warrant is produced, the warrant's details (including whether it is a judicial warrant or an administrative warrant), whether the immigration authority is claiming exigent circumstances, and any other consideration the legal counsel has identified.

~~No staff member shall be disciplined, suspended, terminated, or otherwise punished for implementing the updated school security and safety plan regarding staff interactions with an immigration authority. This protection specifically applies to staff who take any of the permitted actions listed above and direct the immigration authority to communicate with the designated administrator. *(PA 25-1 An Act Concerning Interactions Between School Personnel and Immigration Authorities, The Purchase and Operation of Certain Drones, Grants to Certain Nonprofit Organizations, and Student Athlete Compensation Through Endorsement Contracts and Revenue Sharing Agreements)*~~

Mandatory Crisis Response Drill Procedures

In accordance with P.A. 26-1, all crisis response drills (including lockdown, shelter-in-place, and evacuation exercises) must comply with the following operational standards:

1. Written notification must be transmitted to staff, students, and parents/guardians at least seven (7) calendar days in advance of any crisis drill via direct email, text alert, or student portal.
2. Immediately as the drill begins, the principal or designee shall broadcast a building-wide announcement stating clearly: "Attention staff and students, we are beginning a security drill. This is only a drill."
3. Drills conducted while students are present must be free of active assailant simulations, fake gunfire, pyrotechnics, or unannounced surprise scenarios.
4. Teachers shall review drill steps with students in an age and developmentally appropriate manner prior to the exercise and allow time post-drill for student debriefing and questions.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

Each school and district building shall establish a **School Security and Safety Committee**. The Committee is responsible for developing the school's Security and Safety Plan and shall include a *local police officer*, *local first responder*, *teacher and administrator* from the school, a *mental health professional*, a *special education department representative*, a *parent or guardian of a student at the school*, *the administrator(s) designated to interact with immigration authorities,* and may include any other person deemed necessary, such as a *nurse*, *custodian or property manager*, *local emergency management director, local public health director, information technology manager,* and *transportation coordinator*. The School Security and Safety Committee shall also invite subject-matter experts to participate as needed, including, for example, the local public works director, the high school student council president, and/or the food service director.

The Superintendent shall annually review, update as necessary, and submit a School Security and Safety Plan for each school under its jurisdiction to the DESPP/DEMHS Regional Coordinator based on the standards and required template as updated. These annual submissions shall also include the results of security and vulnerability assessments conducted every two years for each school.

The Superintendent shall identify a lead administrator, such as the school principal, who shall conduct a security and vulnerability assessment for each school under the jurisdiction of such board every two years and develop a plan as described in Personal safety and security (Number 4 under Security and Safety Plans) and Steps to be taken after the disaster or emergency (Number 8 under the same section). By November 1st of each school year, the board of education, through the superintendent, shall submit to its DEMHS Regional Coordinator an electronic copy of the plan for that year.

School Security and Safety Plans shall be based on the school security and safety plan standards and template developed by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, pursuant to section 86 of PA 13-3.

In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the District's procedures include strategies and actions that are compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) used by all first responders at all levels for prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. **Regular inspection** of school facilities and equipment and identification of risks;
2. **Instruction and practice** for students and employees regarding emergency plans, including:
    a. Staff training in first aid, *stop the bleed*, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
    b. Regular practice of emergency procedures by students and staff.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

3. Specific determination **of roles and responsibilities** of staff during a disaster or other emergency, including determination of:
    a. The appropriate chain of command at the District and, if communication between District and site is not possible, at each site. (Use of the National Incident Command System);
    b. Individuals responsible for specific duties;
    c. Designation of the Principal for the overall control and supervision of activities at each school during the emergency, including authorization to use his/her discretion in situations that do not permit execution of prearranged plans;
    d. Identification of at least one person at each site who holds a valid certificate in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
    e. Assignment of responsibility for identifying injured persons and administering first aid.
4. **Personal safety and security**, including:
    a. Identification of areas of responsibility for supervision of students;
    b. Procedures for evacuation of students and staff, including a procedure to release students, including posting of evacuation routes;
    c. Procedures for release of students, including a procedure to release students when reference to the emergency card is not feasible;
    d. Identification of transportation needs, including a plan that allows bus seating capacity limits to be exceeded when a disaster or hazard requires students to be moved immediately to ensure their safety;
    e. Provision of a first aid kit to each classroom;
    f. Arrangements for students and staff with special needs;
    g. Upon notification that a health crisis, such as a pandemic, exists, attendance policies for students and sick leave policies for staff with known or suspected infectious diseases should be adjusted.
5. **Closure of schools**, including an analysis of:
    a. The duration of the event's impact and possible scenarios;
    b. The impact on student learning and methods to ensure continuity of instruction;
    c. How to provide for continuity of operations for essential central office operations;
    d. Communicating school closures and other operational decisions to the staff, students, Board of Education, local officials, and community members.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

6. **Communication** among staff, parents/guardians, the Board of Education, other governmental agencies, and the media during an emergency, including:
    a. Identification of spokesperson(s);
    b. Development and testing of communication platforms, such as hotlines, telephone/messaging trees, websites and social media;
        i. Communicate to students, staff, parents, community, officials, and Board on how/when they can expect information to be shared;
        ii. Share what crisis-related communications can and can't include;
        iii. Share how they will be updated during a crisis;
        iv. Share how they will be provided with after-action summaries of an event, including but not limited to what occurred, how the District responded, and actions the District will take to prepare for similar future occurrences.
    c. Development of methods to ensure that communications are, to the extent practicable, in a language and format that is easy for parents/guardians to understand;
    d. Distribution of information about District and school site emergency procedures to staff, students, and parents/guardians.
7. **Cooperation with other state and local agencies**, including:
    a. Development of guidelines for law enforcement, fire department, and medical emergency responder involvement, intervention, and after-action analysis and feedback;
    b. Collaboration with the local health department, including developing a tracking system to alert the local health department to a substantial increase in student or staff absenteeism as indicative of a potential outbreak of an infectious disease.
8. **Steps to be taken after the disaster or emergency**, including:
    a. Inspection of school facilities;
    b. Provision of mental health services for students and staff, as needed;
    c. After-action review after each event: (This review should involve school and district administration, staff, and emergency services personnel involved in the incident. Each review should result in a written summary to prepare for future events.)

The Superintendent shall establish a **District Security and Safety Committee**. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the schools' development, submission, and implementation of Security and Safety Plans and shall keep track of all drill logs and other documents required for submission.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

The District Security and Safety Committee shall include the *Chief of Police, Chief of Fire/Emergency*, a *teacher and administrator representative* from a primary and secondary school, a *mental health professional*, a *special education department representative*, a *parent/guardian of a student* enrolled in a district school, and may include any other person deemed necessary, such as a *nurse*, *custodian or property manager*, *local emergency management director, local public health director, information technology manager,* and *transportation coordinator*. The District Security and Safety Committee shall also invite emergency management experts and vendors to share information and products for consideration to improve security and safety procedures, fortification measures, and communication systems.

The District Security and Safety Committee shall organize annual District training, including tabletop exercises, drills, and other activities to promote district security. Such activities include, but are not limited to, parent information sessions, Board of Education presentations and updates, and the review and update of published security and safety documents and communications.

The School Security and Safety Plans shall be reviewed annually and updated if necessary and shall use as its framework the **Four Phases of Emergency Management for Schools**:

1. **Prevention-Mitigation Phase**
    a. Prevention is the action schools and districts can take to decrease the likelihood that an event or crisis will occur.
    b. Mitigation actions are steps that eliminate or reduce the loss of life or property damage for events that cannot be prevented.
        i. Assess and address the safety integrity of facilities, security, culture, and climate of the schools, and is considered an ongoing process, directly linked to the other three phases;
        ii. Correlate with school climate policy and subsequent plans;
        iii. Work with community partners to conduct an assessment of school buildings, grounds, and the surrounding community.
    c. Examples of items to build into the crisis management plan:
        i. Fencing hazardous areas;
        ii. Anchoring outdoor equipment;
        iii. Installing building access control measures, such as buzz-in systems, photo IDs, security cameras, alarm systems, and fortification measures;
        iv. Conducting school vulnerability assessments, such as campus entry points and buffer zones;
        v. Establishing wellness programs;
        vi. Establishing tools and protocols for identifying and immediately sharing concerns, such as See Something, Say Something;
        vii. Correlate with health, wellness, and school climate policies.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

2. Preparedness Phase

a. Preparedness is designed to strengthen the school community by coordinating with community partners through:
   i. Developing an emergency plan and protocols;
   ii. Adopting the Incident Command System;
   iii. Addressing the needs of persons with disabilities;
   iv. Conducting staff training and drills.

b. Elements to be addressed:
   i. All-hazards emergency procedures;
   ii. Emergency supplies;
   iii. Incident Command System to facilitate effective response;
   iv. Student accountability procedures in the case of emergency;
   v. Family reunification plans (contact information, notification procedures, appropriate identification);
   vi. Training and exercises (tabletop exercises and full-scale exercises);
   vii. Recovery planning;
   viii. Communication with the media and parents/guardians;
   ix. Annual review and revision.

3. Response Phase

a. Involves what must be done during response to an emergency:
   i. Activating the Crisis Management Plan and the Incident Command System;
   ii. Coordinating with first responders;
   iii. Adapting to an evolving situation;
   iv. Deciding on response strategies;
   v. Accounting to students-reunifying with parents/guardians;
   vi. Communicating with parents/guardians and the media.

b. Consideration of which primary response to use based upon the specifics and the severity of the situation:
   i. Evacuation;
   ii. Lockdown;
   iii. Shelter in place.

c. Response Action: Evacuation:
   i. Use when locations outside the building are safer than inside the school;
   ii. Identify multiple evacuation routes in coordination with community partners;
   iii. Determine how teachers will account for students;
   iv. Ensure teachers, administrators, and staff members have appropriate "Go-kits."

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

d. Response Action: Lockdown:
   i. Use when there is an immediate threat of violence in or immediately around the school;
   ii. Ensure all exterior doors are locked;
   iii. Ensure all public safety officials can enter the building;
   iv. Determine policy regarding blinds, turning off lights, and use of status cards;
   v. Staff and students move to an area that is not visible from windows or doors.

e. Response Action: Shelter-in-Place:
   i. Use when students and staff must remain indoors during an extended period;
   ii. Close all windows and turn off all heating and air conditioning systems;
   iii. Provide accommodations for eating, sleeping, and personal hygiene. Have staff activate family emergency plans;
   iv. Provide communications to students and staff (plain language vs. codes).
   v. Discourage external cellular communications by students and staff during emergencies;
   vi. Provide for review/debriefing of the incident.

4. Recovery Phase

a. Designed to assist students, staff, and their families in the healing process and to restore educational operations in the schools.

b. Four primary components to be addressed:
   i. Physical/structural recovery;
   ii. Business/fiscal recovery;
   iii. Restoration of the learning environment;
   iv. Psychological/emotional recovery.

c. Issues to be addressed:
   i. Assessment and repair of facilities;
   ii. Possible need for alternate school sites;
   iii. Payroll and financial systems;
   iv. Record management;
   v. Returning normalcy to the school environment;
   vi. Identification of those needing psychological/emotional support and development of short and long-term interventions as needed.

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action (continued)

5. **Communication**
    a. **Setting the table:** Preparing the community on what it can expect regarding crisis communications, such as how information will be shared, what it will (and will not) include, and how often it will be sent;
    b. **Real-Time Communication:** Providing internal communication to staff and the board of education and external communication to parents, the community, and the media;
    c. **After-action communication**: Reviewing and sharing the factual account of what had occurred and the outcomes that can be shared.

All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan Standards

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/demhs/_docs/plans-and-publications/school-security-and-safety-plan-standards.pdf?rev=457023ebffa54e1e938fb17de0d74c55&hash=8B651FB5D35B6D64CE80AC7F0DA3F897

Recognizing the need for an "all-hazards" emergency preparedness and response capability for schools, the Connecticut state government has expanded its role as a partner in ensuring the safety, security, and emergency preparedness of the state's local educational facilities. In keeping with Public Act 13-3, Section 86, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection/Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DESPP/DEMHS), in consultation with the Department of Education, re-convened a multi-jurisdictional, multidisciplinary working group to review and revise, as needed, the School Security and Safety Plan Standards and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template, which were released to help schools and the surrounding communities meet all-hazards threats. The requirements for a plan and plan standards are now codified in Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-222m and 10-222n.

Those individuals charged with developing local all-hazards school security and safety plans should also review the Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans, released in June 2013 by a consortium of federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education and FEMA. In addition, we have reviewed and revised the template for an all-hazards approach to emergencies at public schools to address these Standards, including those identified in Public Act 13-3, Section 86:

1. Involvement of local officials, including the chief executive officer (CEO) of the municipality, the superintendent of schools, law enforcement, fire, public health, emergency management, and emergency medical services in the development of school security and safety plans;

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan Standards (continued)

2. An organizational command structure based on the National Incident Management System (NIMS), including the Incident Command System (ICS), and a description of the responsibilities of the different parts of the command structure. NIMS includes establishing a standard nomenclature, and municipalities shall work together through their Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Regional Emergency Planning Teams to implement the standard language and definitions in the attached template plan. Basic NIMS training for school employees may include ICS 100 C, which can be taken online at http://training.fema.gov;
3. A requirement that a school security and safety committee be established at each school. This committee can be combined with an existing school committee, provided that the following requirements are met: a. Each local and regional board of education annually establishes a school security and safety committee at each school within its jurisdiction. The Committee is responsible for assisting in developing the school's security and safety plan and for administering it. The Committee members shall include a *local police officer*, a *local first responder*, a *teacher* and *administrator* from the school, a *mental health professional*, a *special education department representative*, and a *parent or guardian* of a student at the school. They may include *any other person deemed necessary*, such as a *school nurse*, *custodian* or *property manager*, *local emergency management director*, *local public health director*, *information technology manager*, and *transportation coordinator*. The school security and safety committee should also invite subject-matter experts to participate as needed, including, for example, the *local public works director*, the *high school student council president*, *and/or the food service director*.
4. Annually, each local and regional board of education shall review, update as necessary, and submit a school security and safety plan for each school under its jurisdiction to its DESPP/DEMHS Regional Coordinator, based on the standards listed here and further provided in the attached template and any updated template, as well as the results of the assessment described in Number 8, below. By November 1st of each year, local and regional boards of education must submit to their DEMHS Regional Coordinators an electronic copy of their plan(s) for that year;
5. The school security and safety plans shall be an annex to the municipality's Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP), filed with the DESPP/DEMHS Regional Coordinator under Connecticut General Statutes Section 28-7. The school security and safety plans do not have to be physically attached to the LEOP; they may be referenced in the LEOP but kept in a separate binder;
6. Procedures for managing various types of emergencies, including crisis management procedures;

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan Standards (continued)

7. A requirement that local law enforcement and other local public safety officials (including the local emergency management director, fire marshal, building inspector, and emergency medical services representative) evaluate, score (assess), and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills. This means that each named official should evaluate and provide feedback on at least one fire drill and crisis response drill each year. While it may be impossible for every official to attend every drill at every school, it is best practice for the town public safety team (fire, police, emergency management, etc.) to attend at least one drill per year as a team. That way, team members can share observations and ideas. The feedback is critical to maintaining and enhancing your school's preparedness. The board of education shall annually submit a report to the DESPP/DEMHS Regional Coordinator by July 1 of each year regarding the types, frequency, and feedback on the fire and crisis response drills. This report provides an opportunity to develop best practices and lessons learned. The report template is located in Appendix 14 of the plan templates. If you have any questions about completing this report, please contact us at SchoolSecurityPlanStandards@ct.gov.
8. A requirement that each local and regional board of education conduct a security and vulnerability assessment for each school under the jurisdiction of such board every two years and develop a plan as described in Number 4 above, based on the assessment;
9. A requirement that the safe school climate committee for each school collect and evaluate information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying, and report such information, as necessary, to the district's safe school climate coordinator and the school security and safety committee described in Number 3, above (See Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-222k);
10. A requirement that the school security and safety plan for each school provide an orientation on the plan to each school employee at the school, and provide violence prevention training in a manner described in the plan. Training to the plan is critical. This training should be conducted in cooperation with the school safety and security committee, including local law enforcement, fire, emergency management, public health, and emergency medical services. This will give the school community and municipal officials an understanding of the need for unified planning, preparedness, and response;
11. A requirement that each school construct a reference kit available for first responders, which includes several copies of laminated easy-to-read floor plans; master keys to interior and exterior door locks, and other items determined as needed, after consultation with school officials, local law enforcement authority having jurisdiction, emergency management director, and first responders;

Students

School Safety: Preparation, Response, and After Action

All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan Standards (continued)

12. A requirement that each school security and safety plan follow the format of the All-Hazards School Security and Safety Plan Templates, as released and revised by the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in consultation with the Department of Education, including the use of standard terminology. The purpose is to ensure that each school plan achieves the objectives outlined in the Plan Templates. In addition to preparedness and response, the plan should provide guidance on recovery from any emergency incident. See, for example, the "Accounting for All Persons and Family Re-Unification" Annex (Functional Annex G), and "Recovery and Continuity of Operations" (COOP) Annex (Functional Annex H) in the plan templates. Also, schools can take actions to mitigate potential issues through preventative planning. See, for example, guidance provided in the "Mental Health" Annex (Functional Annex J) in the plan templates.
13. Per Public Act 19-184, each school security and safety plan shall contain a plan to provide emergency communications developed for any student identified as deaf, hard of hearing or both blind or visually impaired and deaf, including procedures for alerting such students of an emergency situation and ensuring that the specific needs of the students are met during the emergency situation (A new annex was added to the template July 1, 2021, titled Annex M, Emergency Plan for Students with Disabilities).
14. Per Public Act 21-92, each school security and safety plan shall contain emergency action plans for Interscholastic and Intramural Athletic Events. In July 2022, a new annex, Annex N, was added to the template to address this requirement.

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Security at Athletic Events

Nationwide, violence at school games, especially football and basketball games, is on the rise. Sports are now often played in a supercharged environment where the mix of adrenaline and competitiveness can push behavior beyond acceptable limits. Moreover, individuals involved in youth sports say parents and athletes continue to push the limits of acceptable behavior more than at any time in recent memory.

Many believe a consistent message should be sent to parents about appropriate behavior at games, reemphasizing sportsmanship and integrity. Interscholastic and community youth sports leagues have plenty of levelheaded coaches and parents who keep athletics in perspective. However, some bad examples in big-time sports and an erosion of civility throughout society foster a disturbing environment for many young athletes. Injuries and even deaths have been reported across the country because of conflicts at school athletic events.

Violence on TV can often be mimicked by youth and adults who attempt to imitate the sports scenarios they see. In local sports, as contrasted with professional activities, the barrier between the player/contest area and the fan area is much less formal because fans are often closer to the action and feel comfortable interfering with and/or interacting with coaching and refereeing. In addition, familiarity with the coaches and players can either prevent problems or merely exacerbate them due to long-standing interschool rivalries.

It is a school board's responsibility to set standards for civility and sportsmanship in the local district and to respond when those standards are breached. Therefore, it is essential that school officials closely monitor security procedures at sporting events.

In Connecticut, pursuant to C.G.S. 10-220, boards of education are responsible for all property used for school purposes. Further, C.G.S. 10-221 charges boards of education with the responsibility for prescribing rules for the management, studies, classification, and discipline of the public schools. Therefore, boards have the responsibility and the authority to develop rules to protect students, employees, visitors, and school property. Connecticut’s trespass statutes may be used to criminally prosecute individuals whose presence or behavior has caused such individuals to be asked to leave the premises. School officials have the legal authority to ask people to leave when their behavior interferes with others' ability to participate in or watch a school activity, pursuant to C.G.S. 10-220.

Nationwide, many communities are taking steps to improve sportsmanship by developing and positioning spectator rules.

Rules should be implemented aligned with policies related to the education community, including discipline, school climate, restorative practices, and school safety.

There are several practical issues to consider when developing and implementing public conduct rules. Some tips to consider are:

- Have signs posted at entrances to facilities where activities are taking place stating that individuals whose behavior violates board policy may be removed from the activity.
- Make an announcement at the beginning of the event letting those present know the level of behavior expected of them and that a violation could warrant removal from the activity.
- School officials should be working with local law enforcement officials when developing the policy to ensure law enforcement's support. Having a local law enforcement officer available at the event helps control behavior.
- Use the media to spread the message that the school district is serious about the behavior of individuals at school events and won't tolerate the harassment of students, officials, or coaches.

It is also essential to take the appropriate steps regarding school security and emergency preparedness at athletic contests. Strategies for such preparedness include adequate staffing and supervision, advance planning of security measures, and thoughtful emergency preparedness.

Some school athletic event security strategies developed and promulgated by the National School Safety and Security Services include the following:

- First and foremost, provide adequate adult supervision and staffing. Factors to consider in determining what is "adequate" may include the anticipated size of the crowd, the size of the facilities and grounds (including parking lots) used for the event, past history of incidents at similar events, "intelligence" information received about current conflicts at the school and in the community that could spill-over into the event, and other related considerations.
- Events with larger crowds should employ sworn law enforcement officers. School districts with their own school police and/or school resource officers (SROs) should prioritize using these officers at school athletic events, as they typically know the youth who may be attending. If additional officers are needed, consider first using gang unit officers, juvenile detectives, and community policing officers who may know the youth and their families. The same concept applies to hiring in-house school security personnel, assigning school administrators, and using school staff members, since they also know the students. These individuals typically know those students and non-students who have past behavioral problems in schools and at school-sponsored events. School officials should also employ adequate levels of teaching staff and other support staff. Parent volunteers may also help augment regular staff.

- Deploy police, security personnel, and school staff in a manner that provides adequate coverage to the facilities being used for the event. This includes ticket gates, perimeter entrance/exit points, parking lots, common areas (restrooms, concession stands, etc.), on the playing grounds/inner field perimeter, in the stands, and at other key locations. Have police in uniform and security staff in clearly identifiable clothing. The use of plainclothes, undercover police officers may be necessary in certain large-crowd events and/or situations where problems are anticipated.
- Train police, security personnel, and staff on techniques for monitoring crowds (and not the athletic event on the field), verbal de-escalation skills, procedures for handling fights and riots, handling emergency medical situations, evacuation procedures, tasks related to specific operations (ticket-taking procedures, concession stand operations, etc.), and emergency guidelines.
- Equip all staff with two-way radios. Issue school cell phones to select staff assigned to the event.
- Create procedures related to admission, limitations of items that can be carried in (purses, book bags, backpacks, etc.), right to search spectators at admission point (metal detector scans, bag searches, etc.), no passes out and back in once admitted, spectator conduct, and other security protocols. Post rules at the admission gates, inside the facility, and elsewhere. Enforce the rules in a firm, fair, and consistent manner.
- Establish procedures for advanced ticket sales and on-site ticket sales. Have staff ticket-selling and ticket-taking procedures, with adequate police and security staff at admission gates. Stop ticket sales after a designated time, such as at/by the beginning of the third quarter. Have police and/or security staff escort ticket-takers and money from the admissions areas to a designated location for counting and preparing it for bank deposits, which should occur with police escorts the same evening.
- Maintain separate locker rooms for home and visitor teams. Have team buses pick up and drop off at opposite sides of the playing facility to avoid interaction before and after the game.
- Separate spectator seating into clearly designated areas, i.e., home team in bleachers on one side and visiting team on the other side. If possible, have separate concession stands operating in each of these areas.
- Administrators and safety officials from the schools playing a given event should communicate with each other well in advance of the event to discuss procedures, safety concerns, security practices, emergency guidelines, investigation into rumors and any recent incidents which could result in conflicts, and associated logistics.
- Secure perimeter doors of schools and gate off sections of the building not used for the actual athletic event in a manner that is in accordance with fire safety regulations.
- Create a detailed plan for parking procedures, traffic flow, parking lot staffing during the entire game, and related issues. Consider not allowing any cars into the parking lots after a designated time, such as after the beginning of the third quarter of the game. Advise students in advance to coordinate pick-ups with parents outside the parking lots along the perimeter of the grounds.

- Conduct advance assessments of physical security needs and strategies. Consider the use of surveillance cameras in admission areas, game field areas, common areas (concession stands, walkways, and areas around restrooms, etc.), parking lots, and other areas as appropriate. Evaluate lighting in stadiums, athletic facilities, parking lots, and the perimeter around the school and event grounds.
- Consider having dedicated staff for videotaping the game and, if necessary, areas of spectator misconduct that may occur.
- Establish a code of sportsmanlike conduct and educate players, coaches, cheerleaders, the band, students, parents, and others on the code in advance of the game.
- Have P.A. announcers make announcements at the beginning of the game and at other times, as necessary, regarding sportsmanlike conduct and behavioral expectations. Train P.A. announcers overall guidelines for communicating with the crowd during the event, including emergencies.
- Have clear procedures, roles, and responsibilities for clearing and locking down facilities upon completion of the game.

School Athletic Event Emergency Preparedness

Thoughtful emergency preparedness planning is essential, as incidents can occur even with the best advanced security planning.

- Establish written emergency guidelines. Test and exercise the written guidelines to make sure they work in an emergency. Train all staff involved in supervising events on the guidelines.
- Administrators and safety personnel from both schools involved in the event should coordinate information in advance and review security procedures and written emergency guidelines.
- School administrators and security personnel should coordinate with emergency medical personnel in advance of the event. In many larger games, a number of schools will have an ambulance on standby on-site before, during, and after the game. School administrators and safety officials should also notify their appropriate law enforcement district station and/or area commanders in advance of major games and/or high-risk events, so that on-duty safety personnel will be aware of the event, even if off-duty police are being hired to work the game.
- Evacuation plans should be clear, and announcements regarding emergency evacuation expectations should be made to the spectators at the start of events.
- Staff assignments with roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency should be clearly delineated.
- Create emergency communications procedures and protocols to be engaged in the event of an emergency incident at the event. Communications plans should include outreach to the media, parents, school staff, students, etc.
- Have plans for managing the “post-crisis” aftermath in the hours and days following an incident at an event.

Plans and strategies must be tailored for each school and school district. No "cookie-cutter" plan will fit all schools. Adequate staffing and supervision, advanced security planning, and thoughtful emergency guidelines can help keep school athletic events safe, secure, and well-managed.

In conclusion, while a policy on public conduct on school premises is not required, it should be considered. Boards and administrators should carefully consider the behavior they want to encourage and prohibit. They should also develop procedures for when it becomes necessary to ask individuals to leave an event. The public should also be informed of the behaviors expected and prohibited at school activities. In addition, security considerations should be given to such events.

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The following guidance is excerpted from an opinion piece, *Doing the Nearly Impossible: Teaching When the World Delivers Fear: 9 Ways Schools Can Respond to Endless Images of Violence* (Marc Bracket, Robin Stern & Dawn Brooks-DeCosta, Education Week, January 26, 2026)

"When children are exposed to violence, especially graphic, replayable violence-their brains and bodies do what they're designed to do: scan for danger. In that state, learning becomes secondary."

(While this piece was offered in response to specific troubling events, the guidance that follows is easily transferable to a range of traumatic events to which young people may be exposed.)

The leadership task: Protect students' nervous systems without denying their reality-and protect teachers so they aren't carrying this alone. The American Academy of Pediatrics' guidance is clear: **Limit repeated exposure, keep conversations age-appropriate, correct misinformation, and keep checking in over time**.

1. Start with connection, not commentary

Students don't need a lecture. They need a comforting signal: "You matter here. You're not alone. We will do everything we can to keep you safe at school."

Open class with a two-minute opt-in check-in: "Let's share one word for how we're feeling today; it's also OK to pass."

Then ask: "What questions or worries are coming up for you, if any, without sharing graphic details." (Ask students not to replay the violence, as some may have past trauma from gun violence. For tougher conversations, involve mental health experts.)

Being seen by another and invited to say what is on your mind is often the first step back to steadiness.

2. Set a "no replay" norm for graphic content

Many students aren't just hearing about traumatic events; they're rewatching them. Create classroom or schoolwide norms about viewing violent social media posts:

- We will not show violent videos at school.
- If something upsetting shows up, tell an adult you trust. They will help you handle it.

It's best if all students hear one message: Our school does not agree with amplifying harm by repeated exposure to violent events.

3. Keep it simple and stick to what's true

After tragedies, more information isn't always helpful. In classrooms, "simple and direct" sounds like:

- "Here's what we know. We'll share more as we learn more."
- "If you hear something that scares you, bring it here. We'll sort fact from rumor."
- "Here's what our school is doing today to keep everyone safe."
  - Name safety steps without making promises you can't guarantee. (Avoid phrases like: "This will never happen here.")

4. Invite and welcome all feelings. Hold firm boundaries on behavior

All feelings are welcome. Not all behaviors are:

- "It makes sense to feel scared/angry/sad. Let's identify the adults you trust."
- "Big feelings are OK here. We all have them. Hurting others is not."
- "We can disagree without putting others down, threatening, or targeting."

Warmth plus limits keeps classrooms safe without shutting students down.

5. Offer "choice points" to restore agency

Trauma steals choice. Connection restores it. Give students options that don't derail instruction:

- Write instead of speaking.
- Step out for two minutes and return.
  - See a counselor or social worker.
- Join a brief grounding practice—or quietly opt out.

6. Watch for distress-and respond quickly

Trouble coping often shows up as sleepiness, headaches or stomachaches, irritability, shutdown, conflict, appetite changes, or persistent worry. If you notice a change in behavior or shift:

- Treat it as a signal, not a character flaw or weakness.
- Ask for guidance from your support team early.
  - When appropriate, encourage families to consult their pediatrician or a mental health professional.

7. Adjust the approach by grade level

- **Preschool-grade 2:** Keep it concrete and calming: "Something scary happened. Grown-ups are working to keep people safe." Lean on routines and warmth.
- **Grades 3-5:** Start with what they heard, correct misinformation, and teach the power of social support. Create a "trusted adult map": two or three adults at school they can go to when they have big feelings.
- **Middle school:** Normalize intensity and reduce shame for feeling scared. Use structures-timed turns, a pass option, written reflection first. Consider a buddy system. Help them set one media boundary for the evening, such as not using social media.
- **High school:** Name emotions-grief, outrage, helplessness-and channel them toward care. Offer prosocial pathways (e.g., schoolwide care campaigns) that build connection rather than conflict. For older students, educators can also ground this moment in history.
- For students with disabilities or developmental delays, relying on what you know helps that particular student feel safe and calm.

8. Protect students who feel targeted-without asking them to disclose

When immigration enforcement is part of the fear, some students may be terrified and afraid to say why. Don't put them on the spot. Say publicly and repeatedly:

- "If you're worried about someone at home, we'll connect you with someone who can help."
- "Tell me as much or as little as you want. I will help you find support."

Coordinate with administrators so the burden doesn't fall on you alone. Promise your presence only when you know you can be there.

9. Build a "connection chain" for adults

Teachers have big feelings, too, and can experience empathic distress when supporting students. When educators feel depleted, students feel it. Leaders can make small moves to support teacher well-being:

- A five-minute staff check-in each morning and a five-minute staff debrief before leaving.
- A shared script for tough moments so teachers aren't improvising alone.

The most important message students will learn during these hard weeks (and beyond) is not only what we say about the world, but it's also how we model being human in it.

When the outside world feels frightening or cruel, classrooms can become counterforces: places where every child experiences dignity, steadiness, and belonging. That is not politics. That is the best of education.