

**QUESTAR III PROJECT SAVE POLICY****School Safety Plans****Philosophy and Goals**

It is the policy of Questar III to provide for a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for its students and staff. This policy is implemented through the following means:

A detailed school safety plan for Questar III and each building under the exclusive control of Questar III, not already included in a school district school safety plan.

Policies for responding to threats of violence concerning school district property, facilities and premises.

Policies for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, administrators, staff or visitors. This may include a zero tolerance policy in some cases of violence in our schools.

Prevention and intervention strategies for students manifesting at-risk behaviors.

Policies and procedures for contacting law enforcement officials and parents in the event of a violent incident or emergency situation.

Policies and procedures for school building security and training of students and staff in school security.

Protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage situations, intrusions and kidnappings.

Strategies to improve communication regarding the reporting of violent incidents.

Coordinated policies for reporting violent incidents.

## **District-Wide Safety Plan**

### **Sites Included:**

The following sites are covered by the Questar III-wide safety plan. Additionally, each site shall have a building safety plan:

The Rensselaer Educational Center; The Columbia-Greene Educational Center, the Sackett Educational Center, George Washington School, Tech Valley High School and such other facilities under the exclusive control of Questar III.

Questar III classrooms located in host School District buildings will be governed by the host School District's Safety Plan policies and procedures. Questar III will endeavor to work with the host School District buildings' administration to establish protocols for emergency responses. New Visions programs will follow the host facilities' emergency plans. In the event the host facility has no relevant plan, Questar III will provide a localized emergency plan to be followed. Questar III staff members assigned to Questar III classrooms located in host School District buildings will notify Questar III administration in the event of emergency so that Questar III can cooperate with the host School District in carrying out emergency procedures and drills. Questar III shall plan for adequate supervision of Questar III students in such classrooms, in the event of an emergency.

### **Emergency Procedures:**

In the event of an emergency, the procedures set forth in the BOCES- Wide School Safety Plan and the appropriate building level plan(s) will be implemented. These plans may direct the cancellation of school; early dismissal; evacuation of school or sheltering of students, depending upon the emergency. The National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) will be used in any given incident.

The BOCES-Wide Chain of Command shall be utilized in the event of an emergency that involves more than one Questar III facility. The BOCES-Wide Chain of Command is set forth in Appendix C.

### **Notice to the District Superintendent**

The District Superintendent is authorized to designate person(s) to receive any notice or notification required to be given by this policy to the District Superintendent.

### **Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment:**

The following violence prevention and intervention strategies will be implemented in Questar III:

## **Violence Prevention:**

The following policies and procedures shall facilitate the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to identification of family, community and persons deemed appropriate to receive such information:

Questar III shall undertake the following initiatives to prevent violence:

1. Annual review and adoption of codes of conduct for students, employees and visitors to school premises. These codes of conduct shall include enforceable rules; clear consequences; due process; and explicitly defined roles, rights and responsibilities of the parties.
2. All students shall participate in multi-hazard school safety training on an annual basis as follows: Multi-hazard school safety training shall be provided to all students in facilities under the exclusive control of Questar III by the end of October of each school year. Questar III shall make arrangements with host school districts to provide such training to Questar III students housed in school district facilities.
3. Annual adoption and review of a school dress code to prohibit appearance, clothing and accessories that disrupt the educational process.
4. Staff development is a critical element in the prevention of violence in our schools. Questar III teachers and staff with student contact shall be offered training opportunities in the knowledge and skill required to address school violence and victimization, most notably bullying. Additionally, staff shall be trained in sexual, racial and other forms of harassment, cultural diversity, school security and disciplinary policies, classroom management, crowd control and intervention strategies. Training shall be provided to all school safety officers and other security personnel. This shall include training in de-escalation of potentially violent situations. Multi-hazard training for staff and students will include the following:
5. All district staff and students shall participate in multi-hazard school safety training on an annual basis each school year. Summer school programs are encouraged to have one emergency drill outside of the required fire drills.
6. Each Questar III facility will establish a building emergency response team to review building level safety plans and responses in collaboration with the Health and Safety Office.
7. Basic training in emergency response, explanations and clarifications regarding the Building Level Emergency Response Plan, and execution of emergency protocols contained in the plan will be covered at faculty meetings at each educational facility within Questar III.
8. Additional review of the Building Level Emergency Response Plan will be conducted periodically but no less than quarterly by each Building Emergency Response Team under direction of the building administrator.
9. Specific emergency training such as lockdown, lockout, shelter in place, bomb threat emergency response, sweeper training, proper evacuation technique, responding to various emergency and critical situations, incident command system

(ICS), national incident management system (NIMS), etc. are conducted annually with staff members at each of the Questar III instructional buildings. Records will be kept in the Health and Safety Department.

10. Lock Down, Lock Out and building evacuation drills are held at each instructional building. In certain buildings where the population consists of severely physically and emotionally challenged students, these drills are conducted when conditions permit. An annual calendar of emergency drills will be prepared, in consultation with the Director of Health and Safety.
11. Training to reduce incidents of violence and to improve communications between staff and students will take place as follows:
12. Questar III provides training in research-based de-escalation procedures to designated instructional and direct care staff in accordance with policy. The main focus of this training is assisting students who may be in emotional distress to work through the process of de-escalation through nonviolent means.
13. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a program utilized by Questar III academy based settings involving teachers, teachers assistants, social workers, administration, parents and students. It is designed to improve behavior and social skills in emotionally challenged students. The entire program improves all levels of communication between staff and students in this setting.
14. Restorative Practices may be utilized by Questar III instructional settings. Restorative practices invite everyone impacted by a conflict to develop a shared understanding of both the root causes and the effects. Restorative practices seek to address the needs of those who have been harmed, while encouraging those who have caused harm to take responsibility. Restorative practices emphasize the capacity of all people for healing, growth, and transformation and in this way it encourages accountability, self-determination, healing, and interconnection.
15. One of Questar III's key missions is to offer Career and Technical Education opportunities to students in its component school districts. Career and Technical Education requires excellent communication between staff and student. By its very nature, instruction focuses on teamwork, citizenship, community service and high ethical standards. These standards are practiced in all of our career and technical education classrooms. Students are offered opportunities to apply their academic and career and technical skills outside of the classroom. Many of our staff are members of Skills USA and many of our students participate in the activities offered by these organizations.
16. Questar III shall coordinate a student suspension and other forms of discipline with component school districts.
17. Implementation of programs and/or activities to foster a climate of respect for others and acceptance of diversity in Questar III facilities. These activities and/or programs can focus on celebrating and tolerating differences and promoting processes that utilize differences as a way to foster mutual understanding and respect. These may include but are not limited to the use of mindfulness.

18. Implementation of character based education and in conjunction with the Dignity for All Students Act. This may consist of an advisory program and learning activities that promote the common good in actions whereby students and teachers take responsibility for behaviors, work cooperatively toward common goals, reach decisions democratically and respectfully. Adults model moral reasoning and thoughtful decision making for students and assist them in resisting high-risk behaviors and in recognizing beliefs and practices that are inconsistent with non-violence. These programs recognize and address that many instances of school violence stem from discrimination and harassment.
19. Student counseling programs developed and implemented in cooperation with state, county and local governments. These programs involve school / community teams of counselors in which problems that impede learning or have harmful consequences are identified and addressed through the development of individualized intervention plans, referral to community care facilities. Adult facilitated peer support groups also may be utilized to provide students with opportunities to discuss their problems and feelings in a safe group setting, and to create alternatives to high risk behaviors through behavior contracts, formation of student community service organizations and programs.
20. Partner with families to help them find the most appropriate outside counseling, clinical supports and other resources to address emotional, behavioral and clinical needs of their students.

### **Threat Assessment: Identifying Early Warning Signs:**

It is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence. In some situations and for some youth, different combinations of events, behaviors, and emotions may lead to suicidal ideation, aggression or violent behavior toward self or others. School personnel and students as well as parents are often in a good position to observe these early warning signs.

None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate--and potentially harmful--to use the early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children. Rather, the warning signs are offered only as an aid in identifying and referring children who may need help. A good rule of thumb is to assume that these warning signs, especially when they are presented in combination, indicate a need for further analysis to determine an appropriate intervention.

It is the policy of Questar III that staff be informed in the recognition and use of early warning signs for identification and referral purposes only and not for diagnostic purposes. Only trained and licensed professionals should make diagnoses in consultation with the child's parents or guardian.

The following early warning signs are cited by the United States Department of Education in its publication entitled **Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools** and are presented with the following qualifications: they are not equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness. They include:

- Social withdrawal. In some situations, gradual and eventually complete avoidance of and/or withdrawal from social contacts and/or school activities can be an

important indicator of a troubled child. The withdrawal often stems from feelings of depression, rejection, persecution, unworthiness, and lack of confidence.

- Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone. Research has shown that the majority of children who are isolated and appear to be friendless are not violent. In fact, these feelings are sometimes characteristic of children and youth who may be troubled, withdrawn, or have internal issues that hinder development of social affiliations. However, research also has shown that in some cases feelings of isolation and not having friends are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.
- Excessive feelings of rejection. In the process of growing up, and in the course of adolescent development, many young people experience emotionally painful rejection. Children who are troubled often are isolated from their mentally healthy peers. Their responses to rejection will depend on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing their emotional distress in negative ways-including violence. Some aggressive children who are rejected by non-aggressive peers seek out aggressive friends who, in turn, reinforce their violent tendencies.
- Anxiety. In certain situations anxiety is expected, however chronic anxiety can lead to fear, depression, and withdrawal.
- Being a victim of violence. Children who are victims of violence-including physical or sexual abuse-in the community, at school, or at home- are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.
- Feelings of being picked on and persecuted. The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied, singled out for ridicule, and humiliated at home, on the school bus or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support in addressing these feelings, some children may vent them in inappropriate ways-including possible aggression or violence.
- Low school interest and poor academic performance. Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to consider whether there is a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits the child's capacity to learn. In some situations--such as when the low achiever feels frustrated, unworthy, chastised, and denigrated--acting out and aggressive behaviors may occur. It is important to assess the emotional and cognitive reasons for the academic performance change to determine the true nature of the problem.
- Expression of violence in writings and drawings. Children and youth often express their thoughts, feelings, desires, and intentions in their drawings and in stories, poetry, and other written expressive forms. Many children produce work about violent themes that for the most part is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence in writings and drawings that is directed at specific individuals (family members, peers, other adults) consistently over time may signal emotional problems and the potential for violence. Because there is a real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, it is important to seek the guidance of a

qualified professional--such as a school psychologist, counselor, or other mental health specialist--to determine its meaning.

- Uncontrolled anger. Everyone gets angry; anger is a natural emotion. However, anger that is expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior toward self or others.
- Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors. Children often engage in acts of shoving and mild aggression. However, some mildly aggressive behaviors such as constant hitting and bullying of others that occur early in children's lives, if left unattended, might later escalate into more serious behaviors.
- Internet, Social Media, and Electronic Recording. New technologies have created new opportunities for transmitting information, including communications that can be used to harass, threaten or intimidate others. Cyberbullying can occur inside or outside of the school day and may originate at computers or other electronic devices inside or outside of school - and may still have a serious impact on students, staff and the school environment. Evidence that such communications and social media postings may be occurring must be taken seriously and addressed through the Code of Conduct.
- Social Media. Postings by students evidencing violent behaviors or other indicators of potentially violent or aggressive behavior.
- History of discipline problems. Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems both in school and at home may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These unmet needs may be manifested in acting out and aggressive behaviors. These problems may set the stage for the child to violate norms and rules, defy authority, disengage from school, and engage in aggressive behaviors with other children and adults.
- Past history of violent and aggressive behavior. Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Aggressive and violent acts may be directed toward other individuals, be expressed in cruelty to animals, or include fire setting. Youth who show an early pattern of antisocial behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk for future aggressive and antisocial behavior. Similarly, youth who engage in overt behaviors such as bullying, generalized aggression and defiance, and covert behaviors such as stealing, vandalism, lying, cheating, and fire setting also are at risk for more serious aggressive behavior. Research suggests that age of onset may be a key factor in interpreting early warning signs. For example, children who engage in aggression and drug abuse at an early age (before age 12) are more likely to show violence later on than are children who begin such behavior at an older age. In the presence of such signs it is important to review the child's history with behavioral experts and seek parents' observations and insights.
- Intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes. All children have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic,

religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and physical appearance--when coupled with other factors--may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different. Membership in hate groups or the willingness to victimize individuals with disabilities or health problems also should be treated as early warning signs.

- Drug use and alcohol use. Apart from being unhealthy behaviors, drug use and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes children and youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.
- Affiliation and pressure to become affiliated with gangs. Gangs that support anti-social values and behaviors--including extortion, intimidation, and acts of violence toward other students--cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are pressured to become affiliated with gangs may be intimidated and fear acts of violence. Youth who are influenced by these groups--those who emulate and copy their behavior, as well as those who become affiliated with them--may adopt these values and act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations. Gang-related violence and turf battles are common occurrences tied to the use of drugs that often result in injury and/or death. Gang influences typically may occur outside of school, but can have a serious impact on students' behaviors while in school or on a school bus.
- Other community-based conflicts. Conflicts in the community can have a significant impact on the school environment. These may include conflicts among neighbors, between families, within extended families, or among other social networks. Identifying students who may be within societal groups involved in conflicts within their communities will assist in preventing the extension of the conflict to the school environment.
- Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms or other weapons. Children and youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms or other weapons can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows that such youngsters also have a higher probability of becoming victims. Families can reduce inappropriate access and use by restricting, monitoring, and supervising children's access to firearms and other weapons. Children who have a history of aggression, impulsiveness, or other emotional problems should not have access to firearms and other weapons.
- Serious threats of violence. Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self, including suicide ideation, or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence. Recent incidents across the country clearly indicate that threats to commit violence against oneself, or others should be taken very seriously. Steps must be taken to understand the nature of these threats and to prevent them from being carried out.

### **Reporting Early Warning Signs:**

In the event students and staff observe a student manifesting early warning signs, the following procedures shall be followed:



- Students and staff should contact the principal school administrator to report the information about the student manifesting such signs. The principal and the clinical team will assess the threat and whether the student's family must be contacted. In cases where school-based contextual factors are determined to be causing or exacerbating the child's troubling behavior, Questar III shall cooperate with the student's home school to modify them to the extent practicable.
- It is important to avoid inappropriately labeling or stigmatizing individual students because they appear to fit a specific profile or set of early warning indicators. None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate--and potentially harmful--to use the early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children.

### **Threat Assessment: Identifying Imminent Warning Signs:**

Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response.

No single warning sign can predict that a dangerous act will occur. Rather, imminent warning signs usually are presented as a sequence of aggressive, overt, serious, hostile behaviors or threats directed at peers, staff, or other individuals. Usually, imminent warning signs are evident to more than one staff member--as well as to the child's family. Imminent warning signs may include:

- Physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Destruction of property.
- Aggression for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of violence (time, place, manner).
- Possession of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.
- Increases in violent or aggressive behaviors that are manifestations of a student's disabilities.

### **Threat Assessment – Evaluating and Responding to Levels of Imminent Threat:**

Any staff member who observes or is advised of a potential imminent threat must immediately report the threat to the building administrator. The building administrator will assess the level of threat of violence according to the following guidelines which follow the New York State Threat Assessment Model:

- **Levels of Risk and Response Procedures:**

Low Level of Threat: A threat that poses a minimal risk to the victim and public safety:

- Threat is vague and indirect.
- Information in the threat is not consistent, is implausible or is vague.
- The threat lacks realism.
- Content of the threat suggests person is unlikely to carry it out.

Response to Low Level Threat:

- Notify building administrator or other specified party using Building Level Chain of Command.
- Notify home school district and parent.
- Handle threat at building level as assessment warrants in accordance with the Building Emergency Response Plan.

Medium Level of Threat: A threat that could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic.

- Threat is more direct and more concrete.
- Content of threat suggests the threatener has given thought to means and method.
- There is a general indication of possible place and time (though plan is not detailed).
- There is no strong indication of preparatory steps.
- There may be a specific statement seeking to convey the seriousness of the threat.

Response to Medium Level Threat:

- Notify building administrator or other specified party using Building Level Chain of Command.
- Notify police and other emergency responders immediately, if appropriate, then follow Sequential Response Actions for specific threat as outlined in the Building Emergency Response Plan.
- Notify the District Superintendent, the supervising administrator, and the Director of Health and Safety.
- Notify the home school district and parent.

High Level of Threat: A threat that appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of self or others:

- Threat is direct, specific and plausible.
- Nature of the threat suggests that it has been premeditated and that concrete, specific steps have been taken to carry it out.
- Almost always will require assistance of law enforcement and/or medical response to address.

Response to High Level Threat:

- Notify building administrator or other specified party using Building Level Chain of Command.
- Notify police and other emergency responders immediately, then follow Sequential Response Actions for specific threat as outlined in the Building Emergency Response Plan.
- Notify the District Superintendent, the supervising administrator, and the Director of Health and Safety.
- Notify the home school district and parent.

## **Serious Violent Incidents:**

A serious violent incident is a high level threat and is an incident of violent criminal conduct that is or appears to be, life threatening and warrants the evaluation of students and staff because of an imminent threat to their safety or health, including but not limited to, the use or threatened use of a firearm, explosive, bomb, incendiary device, chemical, or biological weapon, knife or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or serious injury; riot; hostage-taking or kidnapping.

Serious violent incidents will be addressed as follows:

- Immediate response to the incident will be governed by the applicable emergency response procedures (e.g. bomb threat, weapon, fire).
- In the event a Questar III student is involved in the incident, the Student Code of Conduct “Category III Student Behavior” shall govern the Questar III response subsequent to the incident.
- Development of a written school safety plan, when appropriate, describing student’s expectations upon return from out of school suspension.
- In the event a Questar III administrator, teacher or other employee is involved in the incident, the applicable provisions of the collective bargaining agreement, if any, and law shall govern the Questar III response.

## **The Role of Local Governments:**

The District Superintendent may appoint and convene an intergovernmental task force on school district safety to address the need for collaborative arrangements with state and local law enforcement officials. Such task force may consult with Questar III on the development and review of district wide and building safety plans.

The Questar III BOCES designates the Director of Health and Safety as the District Chief Emergency Officer as required by legislation. The District Chief Emergency Officer is responsible for coordinating communication between school staff and law enforcement and first responders, and ensuring staff understanding of the district-level safety plan. The chief emergency officer shall also be responsible for ensuring the completion and yearly updating of building-level emergency response plans in conjunction with each building team.

## **Local Law Enforcement:**

Local law enforcement agencies shall be contacted at the discretion of the District Superintendent or principal building administrators, after consideration of mitigating and aggravating circumstances, in the event: a crime has been committed on school property or premises; there is an imminent threat that a crime will be committed on school property; there is an imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare of any member of the school community.

## **Emergency Services and Local Governments:**

Plans and specifications for each Questar III school building have been filed with fire and law enforcement officials responsible for the area in which the Questar III school building

is located, in accordance with Education Law section 408-b. In the event that additional school buildings are built, leased or operated by Questar III for instructional purposes, plans and specifications shall be filed as required by section 408-b before the first day of instruction at such building. (See also “Building Level Plans – Provision of Building Information to Emergency Service Providers,” below.)

### **Availability and Coordination of District Resources:**

The Questar III resources to be made available or coordinated during an emergency will depend upon nature of the emergency as provided in this BOCES-Wide Plan and building emergency response plans.

Questar III has a Crisis Management Team to respond to “events” (i.e. injury, death or any other tragic event) involving students, staff or district residents that have the potential to affect the school community. The Team not only provides services to the Questar III community, but also is available to provide services to component school districts that have experienced a crisis and require additional resources.

The primary members of the Team are social workers, school psychologists and school guidance counselors. The goals of the Team are to reduce the impact of the crisis, strengthen individual coping skills, prevent further psychological dysfunction, eliminate the signs and symptoms of the crisis in the shortest possible time, and reduce the amount of suffering caused by the crisis.

All members have received specific crisis management training. In the event of a schoolwide or building level emergency, the District Superintendent, or his or her designee, may direct the mobilization of the Team to serve the school community as appropriate.

### **Procedure for Contacting those in Parental Relation:**

When those in parental relation need to be called in the event of an emergency, for purposes of early dismissal or to convey other information, direct phone and /or text messaging contact will be made by Questar offices or by utilizing the Emergency Calling System. In the event that the emergency procedures provide for students’ home districts to be contacted, such contacts will be made as provided in Appendix B, “Protocol for Contacting Component Districts in Emergency Situations.” Appendix B may be revised as needed to update school district contact information and/or to incorporate new protocols necessitated by introduction of new technology.

In the event written information must be sent home with students or otherwise transmitted to parents due to an emergency or public health event, the District Superintendent, or his or her designee, may direct the Questar III Communications Department to prepare appropriate information in consultation with other appropriate Questar III staff members. No information shall be distributed unless reviewed and approved by the District Superintendent, or his or her designee.

### **BOCES Responsibility to Other Educational Agencies:**

The District Superintendent shall take appropriate steps to secure the following information about each educational agency within Questar III: number of students,

number of staff, transportation requirements associated with the evacuation of each facility; and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each agency. Such information shall be updated at least annually by the District Superintendent. Each such agency shall report material changes to such data to the District Superintendent in writing, within 7 days of such change. In the event of an emergency in an educational agency, including private and parochial schools within the supervisory district, and upon notification of such, the District Superintendent shall coordinate the delivery and availability of such services and resources as are requested, depending upon the nature of the emergency.

### **Annual Emergency Drills:**

The following 12 minimum drills are required to be completed for student occupied facilities during the annual school year:

Evacuation Drills: 8 Evacuation Drills  
Emergency Drills: 4 Lockdown Drills

Of these 12 Drills, a combination of 8 Evacuation and Lockdown Drills must occur by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

At least once per school year, Questar III shall conduct a minimum of one additional drill and/or other exercise to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the emergency response plan. These drills shall be scheduled and coordinated with the Questar III Director of Health and Safety. Drills may include the participation of county and local emergency response providers, where appropriate. Drills may be announced or unannounced. The results of such drills and exercises shall be reported to the District Superintendent. Records will be maintained by the building administrator(s) and filed with the Director of Health and Safety.

### **Public Information and Media Relations:**

All contacts from the news media shall be forwarded to the District Superintendent, or his or her designee, for a response. The District Superintendent may direct the Questar III Communications Department to prepare written materials as appropriate. No written materials shall be distributed until reviewed and approved by the District Superintendent, or his or her designee.

### **Identification Badges**

All Questar III staff members shall wear Questar III identification badges at all times while in Questar III facilities. Questar III shall provide all staff members with Questar III identification badges at no charge.

### **Building Level Emergency Response Plans:**

Each school building under the control of Questar III and not covered by a school district safety plan has a building level emergency response plan. Each plan addresses crisis intervention, emergency response and emergency management at the building level. Each plan was developed by a building level school safety team appointed by the building

principal and included representatives of teachers, parents, local emergency service providers. Such plans include policies and procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, consistent with the BOCES-wide Safety Plan. Building level emergency response plans also shall include protocols for addressing emergencies during school sponsored off-campus activities. In accordance with law, Building Level Emergency Response Plans are not to be disclosed to the public and may not be obtained through a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request.

### **Protocol for Responding to Building Level Emergencies:**

Each building level emergency response plan establishes the chain of command to be observed at an emergency and provides contact phone numbers. This chain of command shall be consistent with the national incident management system/incident command system.

Building administrators will be provided with emergency guides for classrooms which describe protocols for responding to types of emergencies.

Building level emergencies may require that home school districts of students attending the Questar III instructional facility be contacted. The protocol for contacting component school districts is set forth as Appendix B. Appendix B may be revised as needed to update school district contact information.

Building level emergencies may call for taking protective actions for students, such as school cancellation, early dismissal, evacuation of students or sheltering, in accordance with emergency response protocols:

- Whether protective action is needed, as well as the type of action, is governed by the emergency response protocols in building level plans.
- Building level plans identify with specificity how protective actions will occur at the particular instructional facility.
- Building level plans will implement “Avoid, Deny, Defend” protocols, including but not limited to authorizing staff to temporarily block doors to slow the access of an intruder in the event of an emergency.
- Building level plans will include and provide for temporary covering of vision panels in classroom doors in the event of an emergency.
- In the event school is cancelled or students are dismissed early, the Early Dismissal Procedure in Appendix A applies.

### **School Building Emergency Response Teams:**

Each school building under the exclusive control of Questar III and not covered by a safety plan of another school district has and shall continue to have an emergency response team appointed by the building principal, subject to the review and approval of the District Superintendent. Each team shall be comprised of school personnel, law enforcement officials and representatives of emergency services providers for that school building and such others as the principal may deem necessary and appropriate.

Each school building has and shall continue to have a post-incident response team appointed by the building principal, subject to the approval of the District Superintendent.

Each team shall be comprised of appropriate school and medical personnel, mental health counselors and such others as the principal may deem necessary and appropriate.

### **Students with Disabilities – Wandering and Elopement**

Each Questar III building level emergency response plan will include procedures and protocols to prevent and address instances of wandering and elopement, which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Determining whether students with disabilities in the building have been identified as having a tendency to wander and elope.
- Assuring that appropriate staff is aware of such students and familiar with such students' behavior intervention plans.
- Procedures for responding to instances of wandering or elopement, such as implementing a crisis management plan.
- Protocols for contacting parents and 911.
- Procedures for staff to follow students and maintain communications with building staff.
- Committees on special education are required to consider whether a student has a pattern or behavior to wander or elope. Functional behavioral assessments and individualized behavior intervention plans will be conducted for such students, to include addressing tendencies to wander or elope.

### **Provision of Building Information to Emergency Service Providers:**

It is imperative that emergency service providers and those others responding to a school crisis have immediate access to floor plans, blue prints and other maps and information about school premises. The following procedures shall be implemented for each school building under the control of Questar III and not covered by the safety plan of a school district:

- The District Superintendent shall retain copies of current floor plans, blue prints and site maps of each school property. Such plans shall be maintained and amended as necessary to reflect changes in the configurations of school buildings or sites.
- A copy has been provided to the law enforcement agency that would respond to a serious violent incident for each school building. A copy has been filed with the building principal who shall maintain such information in an emergency kit in the office of the principal at all times. Such emergency kit shall be portable and shall be removed by the principal in the event of evacuation of the building. A copy has been filed with the district clerk. A copy is maintained by the office in charge of school buildings and grounds.

## **Internal and External Communications:**

Each building level plan shall contain detailed procedures to be implemented to facilitate internal and external communications in the event of an emergency. Such plans shall describe the procedures for communicating with the following:

### **Internal Communications:**

Teachers and building staff

Students

District Superintendent

Director of Health and Safety

Board of Cooperative Educational Services

### **External Communications:**

Component districts – district and/or building administration

Emergency Services Providers

Parents

News Media

Social Media

## **General Building Security at Instructional Facilities:**

The District Superintendent shall receive and consider recommendations from the Director of Health and Safety, building administrators, the supervising administrator, and the school safety teams relating to building security needs. The District Superintendent may direct the implementation of new security measures, or the modification of existing security measures, as needed. The following general building security provisions apply at Questar III instructional facilities:

- The primary method of securing buildings is through violence prevention. Violence prevention is centered on building relationships with students. Every staff member of Questar III has a responsibility to create a culture of respect in our educational facilities. Questar III also will continue to build relationships with its component home districts, to better understand individual student needs and to be able to recognize students who may be in crisis.
- The main entrance to each building will be the only entrance to any instructional building that will be accessible to the public, utilizing a secured entry system after student arrivals. All other exterior doors will remain locked from the outside at all times. Signs will be prominently posted at the main entrance directing all visitors to the main office.
- Visitors will be instructed to sign-in and sign-out of a building using the electronic visitor management system. Visitors will be issued a Visitor's Pass which must be prominently worn while the visitor remains on the premises. The Visitor must be logged out of the electronic visitor management system upon leaving the building. The Visitor's Log will record the name of the visitor, the visitor's phone number, the visitor's affiliation and reason for the visit, the name of the person/office being visited, and the times of sign-in and sign-out of the building. Protocols for escorting or directing visitors to the individual or office being visited within the building have been established at each building.



- Persons observed in the building without proper identification will be directed to the main office. If they do not comply, or become argumentative, the building administrator must be notified immediately. If necessary, the Emergency Management Plan should be utilized.
- Sign-in and sign-out logs will be maintained for sign-in/out of students. Students shall be signed out in accordance with the Questar III Student Dismissal Precautions Policy and Regulations.
- Certain areas in each building will be accessible only to authorized personnel. These areas will remain locked and secure at all times. Areas will be designated and identified at each site. Students will not have access to these areas under any circumstances.
- Classrooms and instructional spaces shall be locked when not in use whenever feasible. Classrooms and instructional spaces should be locked when in use whenever practicable.
- All buildings are equipped with multi-function alarms or systems which will sound in emergency situations such as fire and carbon monoxide presence; and will also sound if the building is entered illegally. Police, fire and emergency medical services agencies have access or will be given access to all buildings should an emergency arise.
- All buildings are equipped with a system for general communication between and among administrators and staff.
- Questar III maintains emergency cell phones and communication radios in each facility. This communications capability increases the level of safety of both students and staff, and increases the probability of accurate and timely implementation of emergency protocols.

### **Commission of a Crime:**

In the event of the commission of a crime on school property, the scene shall be secured and isolated. No one shall disturb or intrude upon the scene or touch or handle any evidence at the scene. Provision shall be made to preserve the scene until law enforcement agencies arrive to take control of the scene.

### **Sites of Potential Emergency:**

All Questar III instructional facilities are sites of potential emergency because of the presence of children. Additionally, the following community sites which are proximate to a Questar III instructional facility pose the potential for hazards or emergencies:

- Troy Landfill (Rensselaer Educational Center)
- Mulhern Propane Facility (Columbia-Greene Educational Center)
- Railroad Tracks and Corridor (Columbia-Greene Educational Center)
- Columbia County Jail (Columbia-Greene Educational Center)
- Washington Avenue Extension, I-90, Electric Transmission Wires (TVHS)
- Routes 9 and 20, Interstate 90 (Sackett Center Administrative Offices and TVHS)
- Green Meadow School (Sackett Center)



**QUESTAR III SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN  
APPENDIX A**

**EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURE  
FOR  
QUESTAR III INSTRUCTIONAL BUILDINGS**

**Circumstances may arise that could cause any or all of the Questar III instructional buildings to close prior to their regularly scheduled time. Should that occur, the following procedure would be followed, unless otherwise instructed.**

- 1) The District Superintendent or his/her designee will make the decision for early dismissal at any or all of the Questar III Instructional sites.
- 2) Once the decision has been made, each of the component school districts will be notified by the District Superintendent's designee or building administrator so that transportation could be provided for their students.
- 3) Persons in parental relationship to students will be contacted through direct phone contact or the Emergency Calling System.
- 4) Transportation for students will be the responsibility of the component district.
- 5) Teachers will not be excused until all of their students have been transported from the building unless other arrangements have been made for supervision of students through Questar III administration.
- 6) Should media notification be necessary in this particular situation, each building administrator has a designated code for the School Closing Network.
- 7) If it is necessary or desirable for written information to be distributed to parents, guardians, or the public, the building administrator will contact the District Superintendent, or his or her designee, to request the preparation of written materials by the Questar III Communications Department. All written materials will be reviewed by, and are subject to review and approval of the District Superintendent, or his or her designee, before they may be distributed.

7/9/09

**QUESTAR III SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN -  
APPENDIX B**

**PROTOCOL FOR CONTACTING  
COMPONENT DISTRICTS  
IN  
EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

- 1) Receive emergency information from District Superintendent or designee, (Who, What, When, and Where), and follow directive as to which districts are to be contacted.
- 2) Refer to the COMPONENT SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION attached.
- 3) Contact each district as directed relaying the necessary emergency information, including the nature of the emergency, the need for transportation if early dismissal is being implemented, and, where applicable, the alternate site for student dismissal when students are evacuated.
- 4) Contact departments within Questar III that may be of assistance to the District Superintendent or designee, or could assist the affected districts in the emergency situation. These may include but not be limited to: Health & Safety, Communications, and Crisis Management.
- 5) Emergency protocols will direct when students will be sheltered in place or evacuated from the school to an approved evacuation site in accordance with the building-level emergency plan. Whenever possible, approved evacuation sites shall be within walking distance of the educational facility. In the event that transportation to the site is required, the transportation provider shall be contacted immediately upon the decision to evacuate the building. In the event of evacuation, the evacuation site will be immediately notified of the need to evacuate students to the site.

7/7/10



**2018/19 COMPONENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION  
BY COUNTY**

**RENSSELAER (cont'd)**

Lansingburgh Central School District  
Superintendent: Cynthia DeDominick  
576 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Troy, NY 12182  
Phone: (518) 233-6850 x3400                      x3400  
Fax: (518) 235-7436

No. Greenbush Common School District  
Superintendent: Christine Hamill  
52 North Greenbush Road, Unit B  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 283-6748  
Fax: (518) 283-6609

Rensselaer City School District  
Superintendent: Joseph Kardash  
25 Van Rensselaer Drive  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: (518) 465-7509  
Fax: (518) 436-0479

Schodack Central School District  
Superintendent: Jason Chevrier  
1216 Maple Hill Road  
Castleton, NY 12033  
Phone: (518) 732-2297  
Fax: (518) 732-7710

Troy City School District  
Superintendent: John Carmello  
1728 Tibbits Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 271-5210  
Fax: (518) 271-5229

Wynantskill Union Free School District  
Superintendent: Dr. Thomas Reardon  
PO Box 345  
Wynantskill, NY 12198  
Phone: (518) 283-4600 X11  
Fax: (518) 283-3799

**2018/19 COMPONENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION  
BY COUNTY**

**COLUMBIA**

Berkshire Union Free School District  
Superintendent: Bruce Potter  
PO Box 370  
Canaan, NY 12029  
Phone: (518) 781-3500 x3511    x3511  
Fax: (518) 781-4890

New Lebanon Central School District  
Superintendent: Leslie Whitcomb  
14665 State Route 22  
New Lebanon, NY 12125  
Phone: (518) 794-9016  
Fax: (518) 766-5574

Chatham Central School District  
Superintendent: Dr. Salvatore DeAngelo  
50 Woodbridge Avenue  
Chatham, NY 12037  
Phone: (518) 392-2400    x1501  
Fax: (518) 392-2413

Taconic Hills Central School District  
Superintendent: Dr. Neil Howard  
PO Box 482  
Craryville, NY 12521  
Phone: (518) 325-0310  
Fax: (518) 325-3557

Germantown Central School District  
Superintendent: Susan Brown  
123 Main Street  
Germantown, NY 12526  
Phone: (518) 537-6281  
Fax: (518) 537-6283

Hudson City School District  
Superintendent: Maria Suttmeier  
215 Harry Howard Avenue  
Hudson, NY 12534  
Phone: (518) 828-4360 x2101    x2102  
Fax: (518) 697-8777

Ichabod Crane Central School District  
Superintendent: Michael Vanyo  
PO Box 820  
Valatie, NY 12184  
Phone: (518) 758-7575 x3002    x3002  
Fax: (518) 758-7579

**2018/19 COMPONENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION  
BY COUNTY**

**GREENE**

Cairo Durham Central School District  
Superintendent: Douglas Kelley (Interim)  
PO Box 780  
Cairo, NY 12413  
Phone: (518) 622-8534 x2310  
Fax: (518) 622-9566

Catskill Central School District  
Superintendent: Dr. Ronel Cook  
343 West Main Street  
Catskill, NY 12414  
Phone: (518) 943-4696  
Fax: (518) 943-7116

Coxsackie Athens Central School District  
Superintendent: Randall Squier  
24 Sunset Blvd.  
Coxsackie, NY 12051  
Phone: (518) 731-1710  
Fax: (518) 731-1729

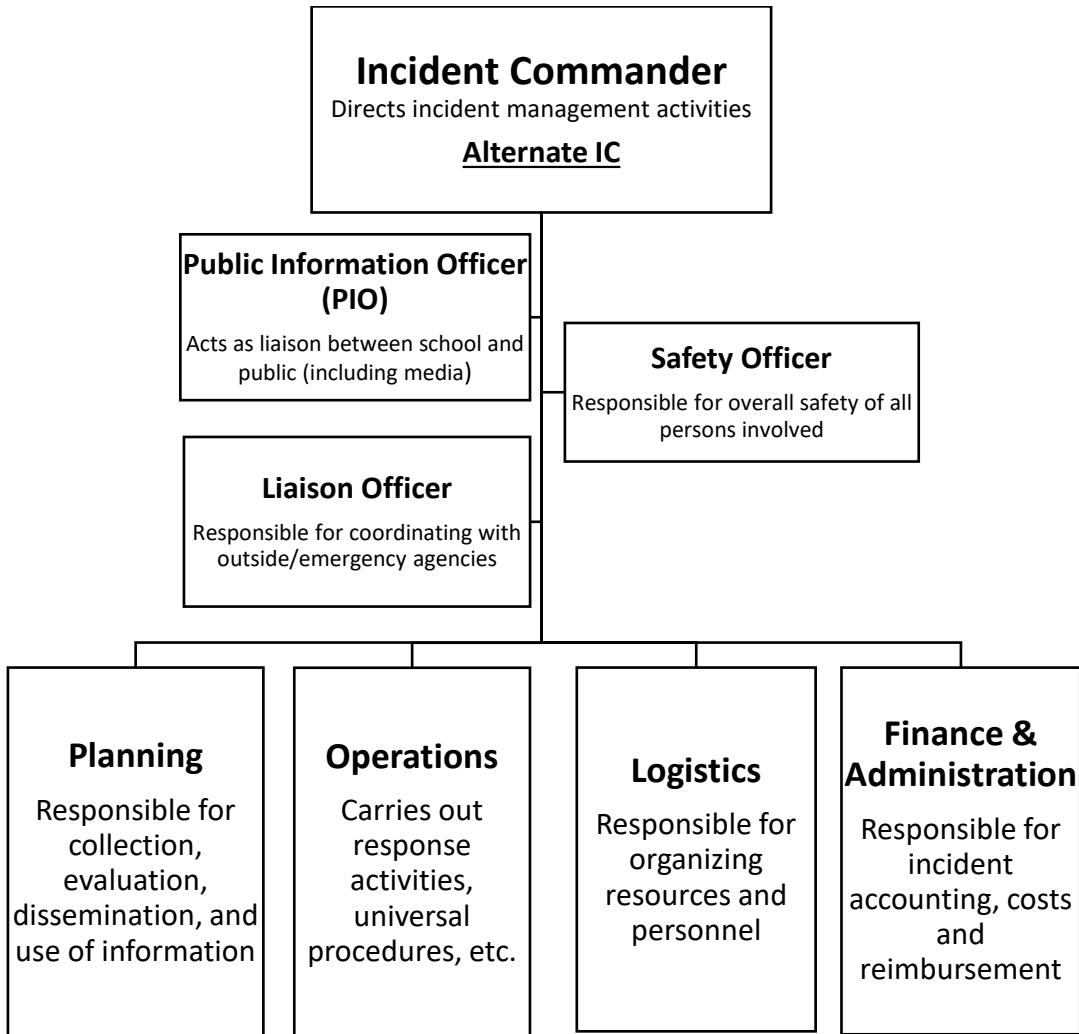
Greenville Central School District  
Superintendent: Tammy J. Sutherland  
Route 81  
Greenville, NY 12083  
Phone: (518) 966-5070 x501  
Fax: (518) 966-8346



Questar III BOCES  
District Wide Incident Command Chart  
2018/19

APPENDIX C

ICS roles will be filled based on the event.



Questar III BOCES  
School Facilities

APPENDIX D

Rensselaer Educational Center  
Anthony DeFazio, Principal  
518-273-2264

Academy at the Rensselaer Educational Center  
Chris Martel, Principal  
518-273-4264

Columbia-Greene Educational Center  
Jake Stomieroski, Principal  
518-828-4157

Sackett Educational Center  
Karen Brockley, Principal  
518-479-3520

George Washington School  
Danielle Remillard, Principal  
518-283-5752

Tech Valley High School  
James Niedermeier, Principal  
  
518-862-4960

ADOPTED: 07/10/08  
REVISED: 07/09/09  
REVISED: 07/08/10  
REVISED: 07/07/11  
REVISED: 07/12/12  
REVISED: 07/11/13  
REVISED: 07/10/14  
REVISED: 07/09/15  
REVISED: 07/07/16  
REVISED: 07/13/17  
REVISED: 07/12/18

