



Levittown School District  
Emergency Plan  
2010-2011

## **1. EMERGENCY PLANNING RATIONALE**

The New York State Education Department Commissioner of Education Regulation Section 155.13 requires that school districts develop an Emergency Plan and update it by October first of each school year. This will insure the safety and health of students and staff and also insure integration and coordination with similar emergency planning at the Municipal, County and State levels. Each school district will **designate an Emergency Coordinator** to oversee the development, implementation, updating and testing of the Emergency Plan. This individual will coordinate with both internal staff and representatives from external agencies to meet required elements of the law.

## **2. EMERGENCY PLAN COMPONENTS**

The school district has developed this Emergency Plan due to the realization of the need and importance of effective response to emergency situations and to **comply with the Commissioner of Education Regulation 155.13**. This plan seeks to respond to the types of natural or technological hazards that may occur through the maximum utilization of the school district's personnel and resources. The intent of the plan is to develop consistent responses to emergency situations experienced by the school district and to integrate the district's emergency response with other emergency responses. The school district's planning process is critical to a workable emergency response and has been developed to include the following:

- School Emergency Planning Committee
- District Emergency Coordinator and Alternate
- School Building Emergency Coordinator and Alternate
- School District Policy
- School District Control Center and Alternate Site
- School Building Command Post and Alternate Site
- Control Center & Command Post Staffing and Supplies
- School Building Information Report, Floor Plans & Resources
- Emergency Telephone Numbers (internal and external)
- Pre-emergency Planning and Sequential Emergency Response
- Emergency Procedures Training for Students and Staff
- Needs of Handicapped Students and Staff
- Coordination with Local Emergency Management Office and other Governmental and Emergency Service Agencies
- Annual Emergency Plan review and Notice to Students, Faculty and Staff on Emergency Procedures
- Hazard Analysis
- Communication Systems
- Evacuation Procedures and Sheltering Plans (Annual Test)
- Public Information Officer and Alternate

These planned actions by the school district will contribute to the health, safety and well being of students and school employees while helping to preserve the school district's resources and property.

### **3. PLAN OF ACTION**

In an emergency, time is a critical factor in the decision making process. Decision makers need to know if the plans have current and accurate information (names, phone numbers, student information, building resources, etc.) Basic components include:

- Integration of police, fire, emergency medical services, hospitals, gas and electric utilities and transportation.
- Delineation of the roles and responsibilities of personnel at the emergency sites (chain of command).
- Notification of who should be contacted in an emergency and in what order.

To account for the variable character of disaster emergencies and the extent of advance warning, there are three different plans of action to protect the health and safety of students and staff. The three plans are as follows:

#### **1) Go-Home Plan**

⇒ The *Go-Home Plan* meets the need to return students to their homes and family as rapidly as possible. Schools need to have current plans that include names and telephone numbers of family and designated surrogates. Special students needs will also be identified and planned for appropriately. It is clear that at no time will elementary school students be returned to unoccupied, unsupervised homes.

#### **2) Shelter Plan**

⇒ The *Shelter Plan* or “stay where you are plan,” will be used when the situation is safer inside than outside. For example, during conditions when the roads are closed for outside travel or they are extremely hazardous, sheltering is called for. Generally, sheltering is for a short time but conditions could warrant extended sheltering. Sheltering plans should include provisions for at least 24 hours. School buildings should be surveyed to identify the *safest area(s)* for occupants.

#### **3) Evacuation**

⇒ *Evacuation* to a safe place requires that a building’s inhabitants get out and go somewhere else. Evacuation may mean only going outside, away from the building and waiting for the danger to pass. In some circumstances, however, the nature of the emergency may demand that students be transported and housed temporarily in some other building. School plans need to include provisions for transportation and use of alternate sites.

These are factors which affect the transportation of pupils in each school district (as well as those students who walk home). The problem of executing a fast and orderly Go-Home Plan during the day is certain to be a complex one. Some districts may take as little as 30 minutes to get all children home while others may require two hours. The time it takes to activate a Go-Home and/or Evacuation Plan of not only public schools, but also non-public schools, is vital information in the coordination of emergency planning at the State, County and Local level.

#### **4. EMERGENCY PLANNING POLICY**

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent of Schools to require each building principal and non-instructional supervisor to develop a school Emergency Management Plan in compliance with the Commissioner of Education Regulation 155.13. The plan shall provide for sheltering, evacuation, early dismissal, written notification to students and staff, an annual drill, and coordination with local and county emergency preparedness administrators. These several plans shall be submitted to the District's Emergency Planning Committee for approval and incorporation into the overall district Emergency Management Plan.

The Levittown School District is a participating agency within the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Joint training activities including representatives from local and state police departments, hospitals, fire departments and the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) will be conducted as necessary in order to insure preparedness for a variety of emergencies. These may include responding to natural disasters, epidemics, terrorist activities or more local issues involving the need for short-term sheltering and or emergency communications.

#### **5. SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY COORDINATOR**

When the School District Emergency Coordinator is notified that an emergency exists, he/she will activate the plan and direct the operation from the District Control Center. Pre-designated members of the Emergency Planning Committee (District-wide Emergency Response Team) will assemble at the District Control Center and implement the emergency response as directed by the Emergency Coordinator. The Emergency Response Team will remain at the District Control Center until the Emergency Coordinator has determined that the emergency is over, or it is unsafe, or no longer necessary to remain. The School District Emergency Coordinator's responsibilities include:

- Take full control upon being notified of an emergency.
- Make immediate decisions regarding emergency response
- Order activation of response and notify appropriate agencies.
- Be prepared to relinquish control to outside agencies.
- Submit post-emergency reports to the Superintendent of schools.
- Perform testing of the Emergency Management Plan on an annual basis.
- Meet with local government and emergency service organization officials to develop procedures for advice and assistance for emergency situations that exceed the expertise and/or resources of the district. These procedures will then be incorporated into the district's Emergency Management Plan.
- Determine when and which educational agencies located within the school district shall be notified of an emergency and the action to be taken.
- Develop Emergency Management Plans with the Emergency Planning Committee for specific emergency responses.

## **6. EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent of Schools to establish an Emergency Planning Committee. The duties of the committee will be to develop, continually review and where necessary, to modify and update the School Emergency Management Plan in compliance with the Commissioner of Education Regulation 155.13. During a district-wide emergency, the Planning Committee will function as an operations group under the command of the district's Emergency Coordinator and will report to the District Control Center. **This team will also be responsible for post-emergency and post-test response review.**

## **7. COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

During an emergency, internal and external communication systems are vital to an effective emergency response. As one or more systems become unavailable due to the emergency condition, the next most effective form of communication will be utilized. The school district's communication system will utilize the following methods as deemed most suitable at that time:

Primary Method: District telephone system (including Connect Ed)

1<sup>st</sup> Backup: District Radios

2<sup>nd</sup> Backup: Cell Phones

3<sup>rd</sup> Backup: Public Address System

4<sup>th</sup> Backup: Alarm System

5<sup>th</sup> Backup: Mobile Message Transport (by vehicle or foot)

6<sup>th</sup> Backup: Email/Fax/Internet

7<sup>th</sup> Backup: News Media

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

**The Superintendent of Schools and the designated School District Public Information Officer will be the only official spokespersons for the School District with the media during an emergency situation.** Parents and guardians will be notified through the news media of any situation that requires a school to be evacuated. The Public Information Officer will handle emergency notification of the media on behalf of the school district. The Public Information Officer is designated to provide assistance in compiling information on the emergency for release to the media and general public. The Public Information Officer will respond to inquiries from parents and guardians during an emergency. If necessary, a media center will be established to inform the media of the nature of the emergency and give scheduled daily updates. **The media center will be established as deemed necessary to keep the media informed but not interfere with the emergency response due to the nature of its location.**

During situations for which outside assistance is received from emergency service agencies, information regarding the situation will be coordinated with those agencies before being released to the media and public. Information regarding the activities of other agencies in response to the emergency will only be released with their special authorization.

Only the ranking officer of the agency in charge of the response will grant Media access to the emergency scene. School officials will abide by the wishes of the outside agency officials determined to be in control.

## **8. SCHOOL STAFF TRAINED IN FIRST-AID**

**See Building Level Plans**

## **9. SCHOOL BUILDING EMERGENCY RESPONSE KIT**

Each school building will have an emergency response kit at each command post which will remain in the possession of the school building emergency coordinator upon evacuation of the building or relocation to an alternate command post.

## **10. SHELTERING & EVACUATION**

- *Sheltering*

School shelter areas will generally be large assembly areas such as gymnasiums and cafeterias. However, the School Building Emergency Coordinator may designate other areas based upon emergency conditions that exist. For example, cafeterias and gymnasiums may need to be avoided during tornados and severe storms that may make them structurally vulnerable or during an exterior bomb threat where the potential detonation is in close proximity to the shelter site.

The School Building Emergency Coordinator, in coordination with the Superintendent of Schools, School District Emergency Coordinator and Director of Facilities, will authorize the use of the school building as a shelter for the public or students from other schools. Responsibility for maintaining records when students are sheltered in another school will be assigned to the School Building Emergency Coordinator of both the evacuated and host school.

**For situations where the school is used as a shelter for the general public, the American Red Cross as per written agreement in the appendix of this emergency plan will assume responsibility for shelter operations.**

- *Evacuation*

The School Building Emergency Coordinator, in consultation with other appropriate personnel, will issue an order to evacuate. As in normal school activities, teachers and staff will maintain responsibility for the welfare of students during an evacuation. Parents and guardians will be notified through the news media of any situation that requires a school to be evacuated. The School District Public Information Officer will coordinate media notification.

Responsibility for securing an evacuated building will reside with the School Building Head Custodian. The School Building Emergency Coordinator will insure the security of school records, special equipment, etc., that may be left behind.

Before an evacuated building is re-inhabited, the School Building Emergency Coordinator in consultation with other appropriate school district staff and public officials (Fire Marshal, Health Department, Police Department, Local Emergency Management Office, etc.) will insure that no conditions exist that would prevent safe school operations.

## **11. EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF DISABLED PERSONS**

**See Building Level Plans**

## **12. BOMB THREAT STANDARDS**

Section 807 of the Education Law, Attorney General's opinion declares an immediate bomb threat as a potential emergency with no time to debate whether the threat is genuine. School personnel have the responsibility to evacuate the school. Whether the threat is a hoax cannot be known when the threat is received. The school building principal or other person in charge has a duty to instruct and train pupils by means of drills, so that they may in a sudden emergency be able to leave the school building in the shortest time possible without confusion and panic. **Routes of egress and evacuation or sheltering areas should be thoroughly searched for suspicious objects before ordering an evacuation.**

- ***False Reporting Prevention***

- ⇒ The school district will consider the following strategies to discourage false reporting of an incident designed to threaten life and property:
  - ◇ Installing a Caller ID System on school telephone lines.
  - ◇ Arrangements with local telephone companies to provide for the immediate trap and trace of telephoned bomb threats.
  - ◇ Installing video cameras in places where public telephones are located.
  - ◇ Instructing students and staff to immediately report the presence of strangers in the building and unusual or suspicious objects.
  - ◇ Establishing a policy where all "lost time" due to disruptive hoaxes will be made up.
  - ◇ To insure testing integrity, developing contingency plans for bomb scares during times of academic examinations.
  - ◇ Training all school personnel who would generally be the first receiver of a telephoned bomb threat.

## **13. SCHOOL BUILDING VOLUNTEER TEAMS**

Each school building will assemble a volunteer bomb threat response team to assist law enforcement officials in identifying suspicious or out-of-place items, which would only be known to in-house staff familiar with the building. This same team may also be utilized to sanitize specific areas of the building if in-house sheltering or pre-clearance of evacuation routes becomes necessary. Teams will be trained for this purpose by local law enforcement authorities.

## **14. EMERGENCY DRILLS & NOTIFICATIONS**

At least once every school year, the school district will conduct a test of its Emergency Plan for sheltering and early dismissal in cooperation with local emergency management officials when possible. Such drills will not occur more than fifteen minutes earlier than normal dismissal time. Transportation and communication procedures will be included in the test. Parents or guardians will be notified in writing at least one week prior to such a drill. All students and staff will receive written information about the district's and school's emergency procedures by October 1 of each school year (See appendix).

- ***Sheltering Drill***

Upon notification of an impending or actual emergency or drill, the School Building Emergency Coordinator will direct students and staff to designated assembly areas or remain in classrooms as appropriate. The test of the sheltering plan will include the following components:

- ⇒ Alerting and warning
- ⇒ Communications
- ⇒ Staff procedures
- ⇒ Movement of students to designated areas within the school building
- ⇒ Evacuation procedures

- ***Early Dismissal Drill***

Due to the double trip requirements for transportation, students who would normally ride on a later bus will gather in the assembly area designated in the shelter plan. They will stay there until their assigned bus has returned from its first trip. Staff personnel in the assembly area will supervise students in assigned areas of the assembly room. Students will be released to their assigned buses when such buses are announced as available. Normal bus schedule will be followed for the early dismissal plan but moved up for the fifteen minute drill period, or in the event of a real emergency, immediately after the decision is made for an early dismissal. The test of early dismissal plans will include the following:

- ⇒ Alerting and warning
- ⇒ Communication
- ⇒ Resources
- ⇒ Staff procedures
- ⇒ Transportation
- ⇒ Public information
- ⇒ Evacuation procedures

## **15. NATIONAL AND LOCAL EMERGENCIES**

The Federal Government has established a color-coded risk level notification system. The Office of Homeland Security has offered suggestions as to school district responses to the various levels. The Emergency Coordinator in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools will determine the specific response for the Levittown Public Schools. In general, for the first forty-eight hours after any emergency or after the increase in alert to the next higher level (e.g., from Green to Yellow or from Red 5 to Red 4) the District will respond with the maximum security parameters recommended at that level in order to permit time for analysis and planning. To the degree possible and consistent with concerns for security, parents will be provided with as much information as possible concerning the options available to the District and asked to make plans with their children in regards to these various circumstances.