

Margaretville Central School District
DISTRICT LEVEL SAFETY PLAN



Margaretville Central School District Mission Statement

Margaretville Central School will develop capable individuals and critical thinkers, instilled with positive self-esteem, creativity, and a life-long desire for learning. To assure our school's atmosphere for growth and achievement, we will foster a challenging educational environment supported by a dedicated staff and the cooperation of family, peers, and community.

Adopted by the MCS Board of Education

December 16, 2020

DISTRICT LEVEL SAFETY PLAN

Margaretville Central School District

Introduction

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in a quick and effective manner. The State Education Department required Districts to develop a district wide School Safety Plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies. The Plan will facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The District Level Plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. To address potential threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Project Save is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses risk reduction/prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in the school district and schools.

In the spring of 2002 the District received its "Review of Compliance". The committee met with other districts and representatives from the State Education Department in an attempt on May 23, 2002 and on their own in early June to address additional compliance issues. Margaretville Central School District's first plan was adopted by the Board of Education in July of 2002. In developing the District-wide School Safety Plan, as required by project SAVE, the former plan was reviewed for compliance with the new requirements. Areas of deficiency were noted and plans for those deficiencies were reviewed during a series of meetings during 2001-2002 school year and a meeting was held on November 14, 2002 for public comment.

Our District Level Emergency Response Plan has been reformatted to address previous areas of non-compliance. The reformatted plan has been submitted to the Board of Education for re-adoption.

Adoption by the Board of Education took place on November 14, 2002 and was submitted to the New York State Department of Education. The reformatted plan was adopted on January 18, 2006. The District Level Plan was again reviewed and reformatted in November 2007. The reviewed/reformatted plan was adopted on May 16, 2007 by the Margaretville Central School Board of Education. **The reformatted plan was again adopted on April 13, 2013. Further review was done in November 2020 with adoption on December 16, 2020.** (Revisions to the plan are required yearly.)

Margaretville Central School District supports the SAVE legislation and has engaged and will continue to engage in the planning process. The Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates ongoing District wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

Section 1: General Considerations and Planning Guidelines

A. Purpose

The Margaretville Central School District-wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to commissioner's Regulation 155.17. The Margaretville Central School District Board of Education appointed a District-wide School Safety Team and charged it with development and maintenance of the District-wide School Safety.

B. Identification of School Teams

The Margaretville School District Board of Education appointed a District-wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the Board of Education, students, teachers, administrators, parent organizations/community, school safety personnel and other school personnel. This Team developed the District-wide School Safety Plan in a series of meetings held during the 2001-2002 school year and submitted in a completed plan to the Board of Education (no formal notes were kept on these meetings).

C. Concept of Operations

The initial response to all emergencies at Margaretville Central School will be the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team.

The District Level Emergency Response Plan was developed with input from the Delaware County Sheriff and Delaware County EMS Coordinator. After the District Level Emergency Response Plan was reviewed by the Board of Education, it was presented to the Building/Crisis Level School Safety Team as a basis for developing the Building/Crisis Level Plan. Protocols reflected in the District Level Emergency Safety Plan have guided the development and implementation of Individual Building/Crisis School Safety Plan.

An emergency or violent incident should be reported to the Superintendent/Administration who will activate The Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team upon determination that an emergency exists. The Superintendent/Administration will immediately notify the Emergency Management/Crisis Facilitator of any emergency or violent incident. The Superintendent and/or Emergency Management/Crisis Facilitator will activate the command post and takes full charge of the incident, activating the Emergency Management/Building/Crisis Level Team, if necessary.

Upon activation of the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent and/or Emergency Management/Crisis Facilitator will notify local emergency officials when appropriate. The Superintendent/Administration may request fire, ambulance and police assistance. It should be noted the Delaware County Sheriff's Department, New York State Police, and/or Delaware County Emergency will be part of the command post, as warranted.

Margaretville Central School has maintained working relationships with local, County and State agencies which could offer assistance in time of emergency. These include, but are limited to, the Delaware County Sheriff, New York State Police, Margaretville Fire Department and other surrounding fire departments, Margaretville Memorial Hospital EMS, Delaware County Mental Health, and American Red Cross. Through protocols described, these agencies and others would supplement the resources available within the district.

D. Plan Review and Public Comment

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation Section 155.17(e)(3), the original plan as made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption . The public comment sessions began at the public hearing held on November 20, 2002 and continued until formal adoption of the plan by the Board of Education. The public hearing provided for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties.

Building Level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.

Full copies of the developed District Level School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption.

The District-wide School Safety Plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team. This requires an annual review to be completed on or before July 1 of each year, after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the plan will be available at the central administration building and the main office.

Section 2: Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Margaretville Central School District recognizes the importance of open communication channels among students and staff. The District also recognizes the importance of all students and staff having a reporting mechanism of potentially violent incidents. The Superintendent/Administration and/or Emergency Management/Crisis Facilitator will activate the plan when notified of an emergency. The District has a well-established community atmosphere that fosters this type of communication.

To continue to improve communication between staff and students, all are encouraged to continue to form relationships of trust and mutual respect. Students who are concerned about violence or bullying may speak to any staff member about their concerns, and are encouraged to speak to the guidance counselors, school psychologist or administrators regarding their concerns. At the discretion of the guidance counselors, school psychologist or administrators, a student forum to discuss violence and/or bullying may be initiated at any time.

Any student or staff member with a concern about a potentially violent incident may report the concerns or suspicion to an administrator, guidance counselor, or school psychologist. The Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team may be asked to assess the potential for a crisis in relation to any such report. The District will continue to use communication and violence prevention through building personnel training and other curriculum related programs to improve and increase communication and violence awareness among students and between students and staff.

1. Training, Drills, and Exercises

At least once every school year, Margaretville Central School District will conduct a test of the emergency plans for sheltering and early dismissal, including transportation and communication procedures for all students and staff. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing at least one week prior to early dismissal drills.

Upon notification of a sheltering drill, an administrator with the help of the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team will direct students and staff to the designated assembly areas or to remain in classrooms as outlined in the Building/Crisis Level School Safety Plan.

During an early dismissal or emergency evacuation drill, students will be released to their assigned buses when the buses are announced available.

A Lockdown drill will be conducted four times but not limited to four times per school year.

The lockout procedure will take place as necessary.

A full campus evacuation drill will be conducted at least once during the school year. Students, staff and visitors will be moved to pre-arranged evacuation sites. Fire departments, local and county EMS, Delaware Sheriff and State police will be advised of the drill. A debriefing will take place at the conclusion of the drill.

At least annually the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team will conduct a tabletop exercise, which may be coordinated with local and county emergency response and preparedness officials.

Margaretville Central School has an active Response to Intervention (RTI) Team in place. The team's primary purpose is to serve as a resource for school staff that has concerns about an individual student's social, emotional, and academic status. The team explores potential resource alternatives and recommends specific interventions to be made on behalf of the student or teacher.

The District will provide training in violence recognition, de-escalation, crisis intervention and school safety procedures to all staff members during regular Superintendent's conference days, during regularly scheduled district employee meetings and during new employee orientation.

2. Implementation of School Security

- Administration/staff members will monitor halls before school, during class changes and after school
- Part time staff will be maintained at the secondary level as deemed necessary.
- 1st period teachers will inform students of emergency procedures at the beginning of each school year at the 6-12 level Pre-k – 5 students will receive more comprehensive emergency procedures instruction
- Administration and designated staff will monitor the lunch room
- At the elementary level (PreK-5), classroom teachers will escort students to specials, lunch and recess
- Support aides/teachers will monitor recess activities Pre-k through 12
- Video cameras will help monitor entrances/exits and hallways
- Random searches will be done by the New York State Police K-9 Unit
- Information regarding emergency procedures is available to parents and students on the MCS website
- Student handbooks are available to parents/guardians upon request from the Principal
- Visitors must sign in and obtain a “visitor’s pass” before proceeding to another office, classroom, or any other area during regular school hours
- An administrator will decide when/which doors are unlocked in each building and will designate the entrance to be used by visitors
- Security cameras are located inside and outside each school building

3. Coordination with Emergency Officials

Information regarding school population, number of staff, transportation needs, and telephone numbers of key officials of each educational agency located within the Margaretville Central School District is maintained in the Superintendent's office. There are no other outside educational agencies located within the District.

B. Annual Multi-Hazard Training for Staff and Students

Margaretville Central School District will annually provide staff training in identifying early warning signs of violence in students, early intervention strategies and violence prevention during Superintendent’s Conference Days. Training may be provided by District personnel, BOCES personnel, community organizations, local, county and State emergency management or law enforcement agencies, or by any other means deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and Professional Development personnel to include Emergency/Crisis Management Team members. Information received of early indicators of potentially violent behaviors, such as identification of family, community and environmental factors, may be included in this training and made available to persons deemed appropriate to receive such information.

C. Identification of Sites of Potential Emergencies

Sites of potential emergency may be identified in cooperation with local emergency management agencies, BOCES and/or recognized by the Building/Crisis Level School Safety Team. When potential sites for emergency are identified, the plan may be amended, as necessary. Sites where potential emergency incidents may occur:

- Highways and roads adjacent to the school buildings
- Offices, hallways, cafeteria, conference rooms
- Playing fields and buses
- Other

Natural Disasters

- A. Severe Weather:** Analysis of weather patterns and previous disasters in our area indicate that the highest likelihood of a natural disaster would be from a severe and/or sudden winter storm. Severe thunderstorms, high winds and floods also have been known to cause significant damage in our area. A tornado touched down in Delaware County in 2002. Such disasters could affect the school with respect to transportation routes, loss of power and/or land line/cell telephone/internet communications and damage to the buildings themselves.
- B. Flooding:** The Delaware River runs adjacent to the Margaretville Central School Campus and 415 Main Street and has the potential to inundate the entire MCS Campus and the Village of Margaretville, as happened on January 19, 1996 and August 28, 2011.
- C. Earthquake:** Damage from an earthquake could include damage to the buildings themselves, interference with normal transportation routes or loss of power and/or land line/cell/internet communications.

Manmade Disasters

- A. Highways:** Margaretville Central School is located at 415 Main Street, Margaretville, NY, which runs parallel to Routes 28/30. As chemical liquid propane is sometimes transported on Route 28/30, an accident involving a truck carrying toxic materials on one of these highways could pose some risk associated with toxic fumes or other leakage.
- B. Railways:** The Margaretville Central School is located 1 mile south of the railroad tracks. The railway is used exclusively as a tourist route. No hazardous materials are transported.

Civil Disturbances: Margaretville Central School is as likely to experience a sniper, hostage situation, bomb threat, etc. as is any other public institution.

Other Disasters: A fire, explosion, equipment failure, waterline break, toxic substance release, or mass illness could occur in any building. These types of disasters are covered in the Building/Crisis Level School Safety Plan. General plans for some of these disasters are included herein.

- A. Field Trips:** In the event of an emergency, the bus driver, teacher, coach or other person in charge will contact the administration. If the incident involves injury or death, it is the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify family members as soon as possible and to communicate with the media.
- B. Business Travel:** In the event of an emergency, the employee or his/her designees will contact an administrator. If the incident involves injury or death, it is the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify family members as soon as possible and to communicate with the media.
- C. Notification and Activation:** In the event of a violent incident on school property, it is the responsibility of the Superintendent/Administration to notify law enforcement agencies. Telephone numbers for contacting the appropriate agencies will be maintained in all buildings.

If warranted, parents may be notified of the emergency/early dismissal by telephone messenger communication system/website. Parents are encouraged to be aware of media announcements regarding Margaretville Central School. The Superintendent will provide the media with information pertinent to the emergency. In an emergency, parents and/or guardians may be given details via a letter from the Superintendent. Runners may be used to disseminate information internally.

In the event of an emergency, the Superintendent and/or Building Principal will notify all building occupants to take the appropriate action and will initiate an incident report.

- D. Hazard Guidelines:** The Building/Crisis Level School Safety Plan includes multi-hazard response plans for taking actions in response to an emergency. Examples of such emergencies could be and are not limited to the following:

Threats of Violence	Intruder
Hostage/Kidnapping	Explosive/Bomb Threat
Natural/Weather Related	Hazardous Material
Civil Disturbance	Biological
School Bus Accident	Radiological
Gas Leak	Epidemic/Pandemic
Others as determined by the Building/Crisis Level School Safety Team	

- E. Evacuation Procedures:** Policies and procedures that have been developed for the safe evacuation of students, school personnel and visitors to the school in the event of a serious violent incident include but are not limited to the following:

- Evacuation before, during and after school hours (including securing during evacuation)
- Evacuation routes (internal and external)
- Sheltering sites (internal and external)
- Procedures for addressing medical needs
- Transportation
- Emergency notification of persons in parental relation to the students
- Other procedures as determined by the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Team

F. Security of Crime Scene: Policies and procedures have been established for securing and restricting access to a crime scene in order to preserve evidence from being disturbed or destroyed in cases of violent crimes on school property.

Section 3: Response – Notification and Activation

Internal Communications: In the event of a violent incident on school property, it is the responsibility of the Superintendent/Administration to notify law enforcement agencies. Telephone numbers for contacting the appropriate agencies will be maintained in all buildings. If warranted, parents may be notified of the emergency/early dismissal by telephone. Parents are encouraged to be aware of media announcements regarding Margaretville Central School. The Superintendent/Administration will provide the media with information pertinent to the emergency. In an emergency, parents/guardians may be given details via a letter from the Superintendent. Runners may be used to disseminate information internally.

In the event of an emergency, the Superintendent will notify all building occupants to take appropriate protective action and he/she will initiate an Incident Report.

External Communications: The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Building/Crisis Level Team, shall issue all public communications, prepare news releases and brief the media as appropriate. **NO MARGARETVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA DURING OR AFTER AN EMERGENCY UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED TO DO SO BY THE SUPERINTENDENT.**

Family Notification: In the event of an injury or the death of a Margaretville Central School district student(s) or employee(s), family members shall be notified as soon as possible. Responsibility for notification:

- Superintendent (in conjunction with)
- Emergency Management/Crisis Facilitator
- Building Principal
- Guidance Counselors

Media Announcements: Media will not be given information regarding injury or death until the next of kin has been notified and the Superintendent has authorized the release of information.

Assignment of Responsibilities: The Superintendent has designated the following individuals in his absence in case of an emergency:

First Designee	Principal/Dean of Students/CSE Chairperson
Second Designee	Crisis Team

Any Margaretville Central School District employee or volunteer made aware of any threat of violence (whether direct or implied) by a student, staff member or visitor while on school property will immediately report such threat to an administrator. The administrator may use de-escalation techniques, if trained, or call upon other trained staff to use de-escalation techniques. The administrator may take action as described in the Margaretville Central School District Code of Conduct.

Any student who is aware of any threat of violence (whether direct or implied) towards a student, staff member, visitor, or person(s), will immediately report such threat to a Margaretville Central School District staff member. The staff member will then immediately report the threat to an administrator. The student may make the report anonymously.

Any District employee or student who witnesses or is made aware of an act of violence by a student, a District employee, or visitor shall immediately notify an administrator.

The District Level School Safety Team found a zero tolerance policy for school violence is in the best interest of the District based upon the advice of the school attorneys.

An administrator may isolate an area, if the situation warrants, and will determine the level of threat. If necessary, an administrator may initial a lock down procedure.

An administrator may contact appropriate law enforcement agencies to report acts of violence in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Added penalties may be assessed in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Continuity of Operations: In the event of an emergency that may endanger the health and welfare of students and staff, the Superintendent has final discretion regarding appropriate responses. Such emergencies include, but are not limited to, bomb threats, hostage situations, intrusions, weapons and kidnappings. The Superintendent will consult with appropriate personnel to determine how to respond to the emergency. The Superintendent will also consult with law enforcement or emergency response personnel. In the absence of the Superintendent, the chain of command for emergencies will be followed:

First Designee	Principal
Second Designee	Dean of Students/CSE Chairperson
Third Designee	Crisis Team

In order to safeguard students, staff and visitors, the Superintendent/Administration may decide that none or all of the following are appropriate responses to an emergency:

- **No action** (if no credible threat exists)

- **Lock Out** Lock Out is the response to an actual or potential threat from outside the school building). A Lock Out allows no unauthorized personnel in the building. **ALL** exterior doors are locked and the main entrance is locked and monitored by school personnel. This procedure allows the school to continue with the normal school day. Outside activities are curtailed. The objective of Lock Out is to keep any threat of violence and dangerous incident out of the school building and promote minimal disruption to the education process.
- **Shelter in Place** Shelter in Place is a procedure whereby a portion of or the entire school population may be moved to a single or multiple location within the school building depending on the type of incident. This procedure is used most commonly during bomb threats and medical or weather emergencies. The objectives are to minimize injury or death, to locate and contain any device or weather damage, to facilitate emergency responses and to establish safe routes and designated areas.
- **Lock Down** Lock Down is a procedure used when there is an immediate/imminent threat to the school building population. Staff/students/visitors are secured in the rooms they are currently in and no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been resolved. Lock Down objectives are to minimize injury or death, to facilitate effective response, to secure as many people as possible in a safe place and to neutralize the threat.
- **Emergency Evacuation** Emergency Evacuation is the procedure of moving all students, staff and visitors to a secure location off campus as outlined in the Building/Crisis Level Emergency Response Plan.

Access to Floor Plans: Plans and procedures are accessible in the Superintendent's office or the Building and Grounds office. Plans and procedures include, but are not limited to, floor plans of the buildings, blueprints, schematics (interior and exterior), and road maps of immediate surroundings.

Evacuation Procedures: Policies and procedures that have been developed for the safe evacuation of students, staff, and visitors to the school in the event of a serious violent incident include at least the following:

- Evacuation before, during, and after school hours (including security during evacuations)
- Evacuation routes (internal and external)
- Sheltering sites (internal and external)
- Procedures for addressing medical needs
- Transportation
- Emergency notification of persons in parental relation to the students
- Other procedures as determined by the Building/Crisis Level Safety Team

Security of Crime Scene: The following procedures have been established for securing and restricting access to the crime scene in order to preserve evidence from being disturbed in case of violent crimes on school property. Examples of procedures that may be considered include the following:

- An administrator is responsible for crime scene security until relieved by law enforcement officials

- No items shall be moved, cleaned, or altered without prior approval from the appropriate law enforcement agency
- Nothing in this section should be interpreted or preclude the rescue and aid of injured persons

Section 4 Recovery

The Building/Crisis Level Response Plan will be coordinated with mental health services to assure that the school has access to federal, state and local mental health resources in the event of a violent incident. An example of the types of recovery actions that could be considered may include but are not limited to:

Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health counseling (students and staff) Building security Facility restoration Post-incident response critique Other
Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health counseling (monitor for post-traumatic stress) Building security Mitigation (to reduce the likelihood of occurrence or impact) Other