



DISTRICT-WIDE SAFETY PLAN 2025 - 2026

INTRODUCTION

Dream Charter School's District-wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 and was designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to help prepare the Dream Charter School community to respond to all types of emergencies or crises calmly, safely and quickly. This plan provides clear actions individuals can take if, and when they respond to an emergency, crisis, or hazard and is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed Emergency Response Plans created at the school building level.

To address the wide variety of risks Districts face (acts of violence, natural, and technological disasters), the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. This component of Project SAVE addresses risk reduction, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies that may occur within the school district and its schools.

Our number one priority in planning for an emergency is to keep our scholars and staff safe from harm, and to prevent violence or unsafe conditions. We must be vigilant in preventing their exposure to hazards, or dangerous situations whenever possible. We ask that all staff familiarize themselves with this plan before an emergency arises, so that we will be able to respond to crises efficiently and safely. Everyone in our community plays an important role in crisis prevention and response. By modeling a safe and efficient response to adversity, we can help support our Scholars and broader school community's return to normalcy in the wake of an emergency.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

This District-wide School Safety Plan is directly linked to the individual Building-level Emergency Response Plans for each school location. Protocols reflected in this plan will be used to guide the development and implementation of the individual Building-level Emergency Response Plans.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the Building Response Team. Dream Charter Schools consists of the following facilities in New York City:

- Dream Charter School East Harlem
- Dream Charter School (Pre-K Location)
- Dream Charter School Mott Haven
- DREAM Charter School Highbridge

Upon the activation of the Building Response Team, the Managing Director of Operations or her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified by calling 911.

While linked to the District-wide Safety Plan, the 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 of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.a.

RISK MITIGATION

Emergency Drills

Dream has established policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training that students and staff must participate in, including strategies for implementing training related to multi-hazards. The District has established the following procedures for school safety training for staff and students:

- Annual review of the building emergency response procedures with staff and students
- All buildings conduct emergency drills including 8 fire drills and 4 lockdown drills that include practicing Shelter-In-Place, Hold-in-Place and Lockdown protocols.

School Security

All visitors to any school site must sign in with the school's Security Team upon arrival. A visitor is considered anyone who is not a regular staff member or student. Visitors must wear a Visitors Badge identifying them and are not permitted to wander throughout the facilities unaccompanied by a staff member. If a staff member notices suspicious, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate behavior, the behavior should be reported to the Security Team immediately. Lastly, all schools are equipped with security surveillance systems.

Educational Agency Information

Dream has 4 facilities in New York City:

- Dream Charter School East Harlem
- Dream Charter School (Pre-K Location)
- Dream Charter School Mott Haven
- DREAM Charter School Highbridge

Each Building Emergency Response Plan will contain vital information such as the business and personal telephone numbers of key officials, number of staff, school population, etc. These plans also include relocation and reunification locations in the event of an emergency as well as response protocols for various emergency situations.

Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The early detection of potentially violent students will be facilitated through professional development opportunities provided by the School Leadership Team of the Dream Charter School network. Teachers will familiarize themselves with all available information and records about the regular education and/or special education program placement of each student in their class. Any concerns about the behavior of a student should be communicated with the Principal. The Principal will then communicate with the Network Director of Special Education and other staff members on an as needed basis.

Hazard Identification

Every building within the Dream Charter School network is inspected annually for potential hazards within the building and on school grounds. The Building Emergency Plan includes the identification of any hazardous roadways and intersections near to the school building. There are currently no storage facilities for hazardous chemicals adjacent to any Dream school that has been identified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

RESPONSE

Notification

The policies and procedures for notifying appropriate law enforcement agencies in the event of a violent incident are included in the Building-level Emergency Response Plan. Each plan outlines when school staff should contact emergency services and who is responsible for initiating the contact.

In the event of an emergency, staff and parents/guardians will be contacted using one or more of the following methods:

- Phone Call
- Text Message
- Email

Situational Responses

The District has developed multi-hazard response plans which are included in the Building-level Emergency Response Plan. The emergencies addressed in the plan include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of a Violent Intruder
- Hostage/Kidnapping
- Explosives/Bomb Threat
- Natural/Weather Related
- Missing Scholars

The Building-level Emergency Response plan includes policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school. The following types of procedures could be used by the District:

- Use of staff trained in de-escalation techniques
- Inform Building Principal(s) of implied or direct threat
- Determine level of threat with Managing Director of Operations or his designee
- If necessary, initiate lockdown procedure and contact appropriate law enforcement agency
- Monitor situation and deploy the Emergency Response Team if necessary

RECOVERY

Building-level Emergency Response Plans provide resources for guiding the Post-Incident Response within each building. The Building Response Team is required to debrief incidents afterwards once in a controlled environment in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the response protocols.

When necessary, School Leadership Teams, with the assistance of school Social Workers, Mental Health Providers, Deans of Culture, etc., will coordinate mental health resources post disaster through school, community and the Dream Charter Schools network.