



New York State Comptroller  
**THOMAS P. DiNAPOLI**

# Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act - Safety Plans

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Report 2019-MS-1 | July 2019

Spotlight on Education



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# Report Highlights

## Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act - Safety Plans

### Audit Objective

Determine whether 17 school districts used their resources and two charter schools (collectively referred to as schools in this report) used their financial resources to develop, adopt, file and implement district-wide school safety plans and building-level emergency response plans in compliance with the New York State Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act.<sup>1</sup>

### Key Findings

Schools must do more to meet the minimum SAVE Act requirements.

- None of the safety plans met all the minimum requirements.
- Two schools did not have a safety plan.
- Eighteen schools did not have a safety team or did not have all the required members.
- No school met all of the annual safety training requirements.

### Key Recommendations

The governing boards (boards) must:

- Appoint all required members to the safety team.
- Adopt the safety plan annually by September 1 after holding a 30-day public comment period and a public hearing.

The Chief Emergency Officer must ensure that:

- The safety team develops a plan and annually reviews and updates it prior to board approval.
- The safety plan includes all minimum requirements and is filed with the State Education Department (SED) after adoption.
- All staff are trained annually and only certify to SED if all staff completed the required training.

We communicated our audit results on the schools' district-wide safety plans and building-level emergency response plans to school officials and SED confidentially.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For one school, we only reviewed the 2018-19 district-wide school safety plan.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

### Background

The SAVE Act generally requires schools to develop, update, adopt, file and implement district-wide school safety plans and building-level emergency response plans annually. Such plans are designed to prevent or minimize the effects of violent incidents and emergencies and facilitate coordination with local, county and State resources. We audited 17 school districts and two charter schools, as listed in Appendix A.

Boards must ensure compliance with the SAVE Act. They must annually adopt a safety plan designating a chief emergency officer and appoint a team to review the plan. The chief emergency officer has responsibilities that include ensuring the plans are updated, ensuring staff understand the plans, and coordinating emergency training.

#### Quick Facts

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Schools                      | 19      |
| Total Enrollment             | 110,035 |
| Total Staff                  | 24,304  |
| School Educational Buildings | 163     |

### Audit Period

July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. For one school, the audit period was July 1, 2017 to March 7, 2019. As described in Appendix D, for certain audit tests we extended the audit period.

# District-Wide School Safety Plans

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## How Does the SAVE Act Help Schools Prepare for Emergencies?

The SAVE Act<sup>3</sup> requires schools<sup>4</sup> to develop a comprehensive district-wide school safety plan (safety plan) that includes crisis intervention, emergency response and management. Specifically, the safety plan must include, among other things, policies and procedures related to violence, communication, training, early detection and security; prevention and intervention strategies; a description of arrangements and procedures during emergencies; a description of duties and training of key personnel; procedures for review and conduct of drills and plan testing; and designation of the district chief emergency officer. Schools with one building have the option of combining their district-wide safety plan with their building-level emergency response plan by appealing to the Commissioner of the New York State Education Department to do so.

The SAVE Act requires a chief emergency officer in the school to lead the efforts of the district-wide school safety team (safety team) in its work to complete and annually update the safety plan. It requires the school board to appoint a diverse group of safety team members which helps ensure varying perspectives are taken into consideration. Safety teams must include representatives of the school board and teacher, administrator and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel. A student may also be allowed to participate, if confidential information is not shared. The SAVE Act also requires the chief emergency officers to ensure staff understand the safety plan, coordinate the appropriate safety, security and emergency training for school staff, and coordinate the communication between school staff, law enforcement and other first responders.

The board must make the plan available for public comment for at least 30 days, and hold a public hearing to allow school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties to comment on the plan before the board adopts it by September 1 each year. Within 30 days of the plan's adoption, the school must post the safety plan to its website, and file the plan URL (website address) each October with the SED Commissioner.<sup>5</sup>

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3 An act to amend Education Law, in relation to improving school safety (Laws of New York, 2000, Chapter 181). The SAVE Act added a new Section 2801-a to New York State Education Law to require school safety plans.

4 A charter school must comply with the same health and safety requirements applicable to public schools (Education Law Section 2854).

5 SED filing requirement guidance is inconsistent with the literal language of Commissioner Regulation 155.17 and Education Law 2801-a, as the SED filing system period in school year 2017-18 started October 4, 2017, three days after the plan was due to be submitted to SED under the Law and regulations. The filing period was from October 4 through November 17, 2017.

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In addition, each school must provide annual training to all staff on the emergency response plans. This training must include components on violence prevention and mental health, such as:

- Bullying;
- Effective classroom management techniques;
- How to access crisis support and other mental health services;
- Intervention techniques for violent situations;
- Referral process for students exhibiting violent behavior;
- Regulations and policies relating to a safe nonviolent school climate;
- Social and problem solving skills for students within the curriculum;
- Warning signs for mental health problems;
- Warning signs for violent behavior; and
- Whom to turn to if you have questions or concerns about a student's behavior.

Fully developed safety plans can help protect lives, communicate full and accurate information to first responders and the public, and allocate resources to identify a threat and protect property or evidence.

### **None of the Schools Met Minimum SAVE Act Requirements**

Two schools did not have a safety plan and the remaining 17 had incomplete safety plans. Eighteen schools had incomplete safety teams and 16 school boards did not adopt or adopt a school safety plan by September 1, did not properly file a safety plan with SED or did not provide for public input. In addition, the school officials generally did not provide safety training on all of the required safety training components.

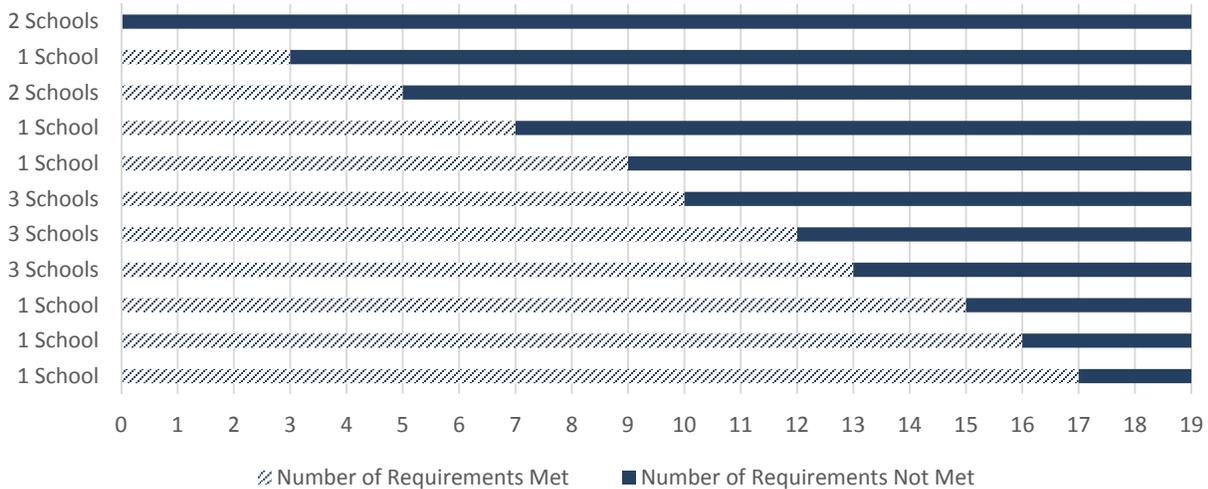
Safety Plan Requirements – A safety plan helps a school prepare responses to emergency situations. There are 19 minimum safety plan requirements. No school met all the requirements. Overall, half of safety plan requirements were met. Seven schools did not meet a majority of the plan requirements. Figure 1 shows the number of requirements met and not met for each school examined.<sup>6</sup>

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6 See Appendix D for methodology.

**FIGURE 1**

**School Safety Plans  
Number of Minimum Safety Plan Requirements Met or Not Met**



While the specific safety plan requirements that were not met varied, some requirements were almost always not met. For example, each schools’ plan must designate a chief emergency officer to be responsible for the safety plans and overseeing the safety team’s annual completing and updating of the plan, among other things. However, 18 schools’ plans either did not designate a chief emergency officer or a delegate, or did not include all of that officer’s mandated duties. Similarly, 17 school safety plans also did not include all appropriate prevention and intervention strategies, such as:

- Collaborative arrangements with State and local law enforcement officials, designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained, including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and are effectively and fairly recruited;
- Nonviolent conflict resolution training programs;
- Peer mediation programs and youth courts; and
- Extended day and other school safety programs.

Appendix B details each component and the compliance rate of the schools who met or did not meet each of the SAVE Act requirements.

Safety Teams – In the 2017-18 school year, one school had a complete safety team, 16 schools had incomplete safety teams and two schools did not have a safety team. Although the missing team members varied by school, eight teams lacked a board representative and four schools lacked a school safety personnel

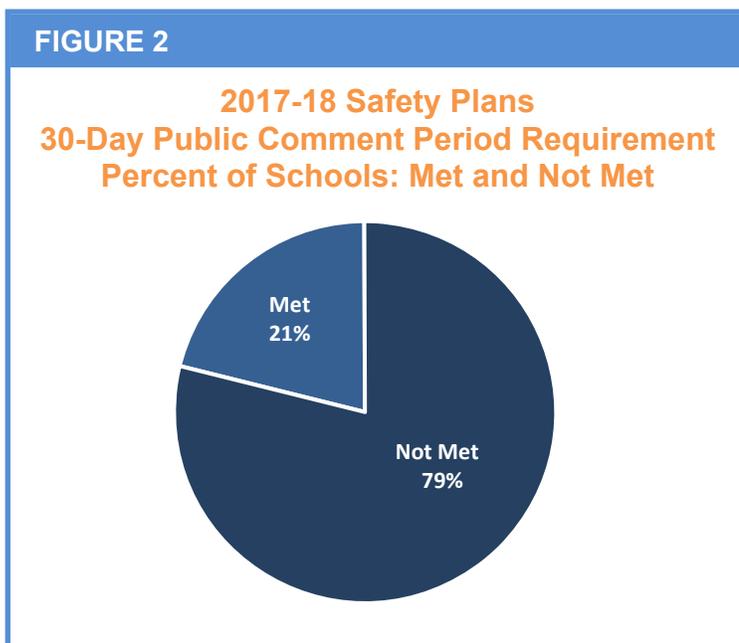
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representative. Twelve of the 19 boards did not appoint safety team members. Rather, for 10 of these 12 schools, safety team members were selected by the superintendent, by the chief emergency officer, or based on staff position. The remaining seven boards did appoint the safety team members.

While seven schools' safety teams reviewed the safety plan during the 2017-18 school year, the majority of the teams did not review their plan or could not provide support that they did. For example, officials at five schools told us their safety teams did not annually review the safety plan, but that the safety plans were reviewed by administrative staff, a different administrative team or a service provider. Safety teams are required, by statute, to review the plans. Their review helps to ensure that all plan components are included and the planned responses are specific to the schools' needs.

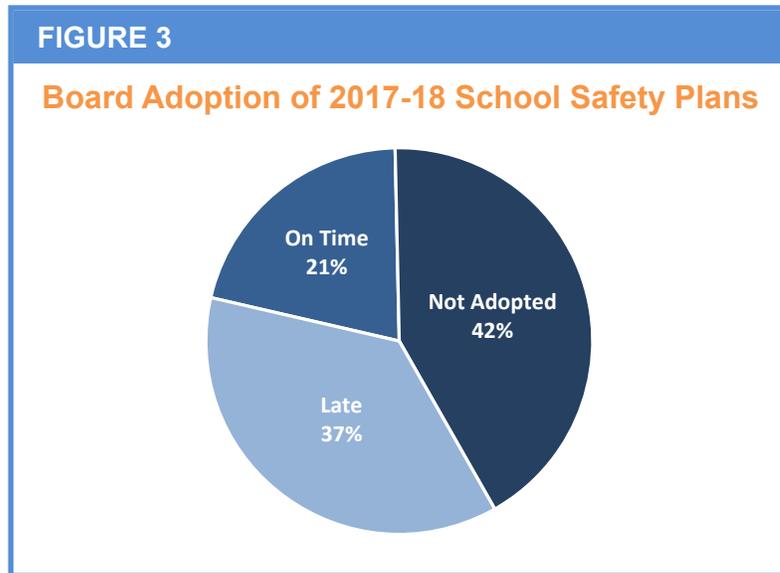
Public Input, Plan Adoption and Filing – Of the 19 schools examined, three schools met the public comment, public hearing, adoption and filing requirements, but the majority (84 percent) did not.

While four schools provided the required 30-day comment period, two schools did not offer the full 30-day comment period and 13 schools provided no public comment period (Figure 2). Further, 13 schools did not hold the required public hearing.



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As shown in Figure 3, four boards (21 percent) adopted their plan on time. Six boards (32 percent) did not adopt the plan, and two schools did not have a plan to adopt. Seven boards (37 percent) adopted their safety plans late, after September 1. Officials at the schools that did not meet the adoption requirement told us they were generally unaware of the requirement to annually adopt the plan or adopt by a deadline, or that this was an oversight.

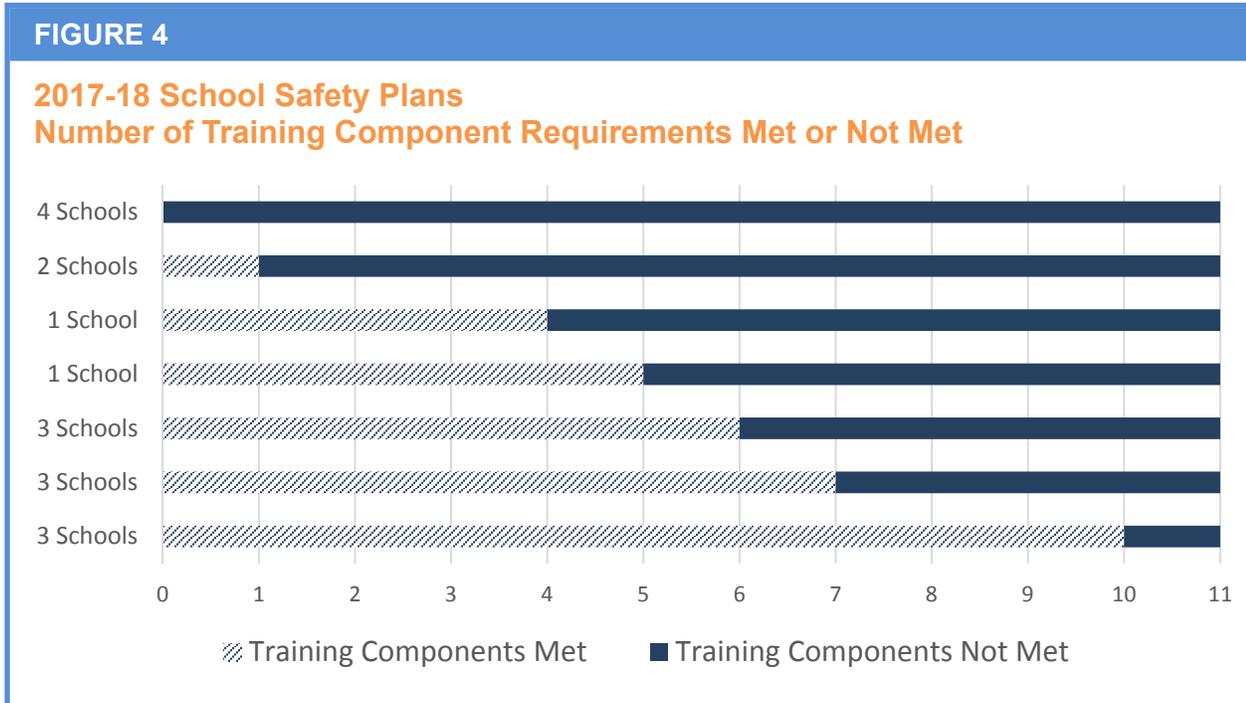


The board-adopted safety plan is required to be posted on the school’s website and filed with SED through a URL link to the plan. While all schools filed a URL link with SED, two schools did not have a safety plan and therefore should not have purported they did. Three schools’ safety plans were filed with SED late, and two were filed prior to Board adoption. Filing a plan prior to board approval circumvents the board’s responsibility and oversight.

Annual Safety Training – School officials have a responsibility to ensure they provide all required safety training and that staff complete it, as applicable. One school offered staff training on all 11 training components at two of its six school buildings, but officials did not ensure all staff completed the safety training. The remaining 18 schools did not provide training on all of the 11 required annual training components to all required staff. As a result, no school met the training requirements for all staff but they all certified to SED that they trained all staff.

Seven schools offered training that met four or fewer of the annual safety training requirements. Ten schools offered training that met five or more of the safety training requirements. Figure 4 shows the number of training component requirements that these 17 schools did not meet. (Because the trainings were inconsistent, we excluded two schools whose offered training ranged from zero to

all requirements, depending on the school building and/or department where the training was offered.)



School officials generally told us they were unaware of these requirements. Fulfillment of all safety plan requirements and annual training would help prepare staff for emergencies as intended by the SAVE Act and facilitate coordination with local, county and State resources, which may prevent or minimize the effects of violent incidents and emergencies.

We communicated our audit results on the schools’ district-wide safety plans to school officials and SED confidentially.

**What Do We Recommend?**

The Boards must:

1. Adopt the safety plan annually by September 1 after holding a 30-day public comment period and a public hearing, and appoint all required members to the safety team.

The Chief Emergency Officers must ensure that:

2. The safety team develops a safety plan, and then annually reviews and updates the plan for completeness and appropriateness, prior to Board approval.

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3. All minimum requirements are included in the safety plan, and the plan is filed with SED after it is adopted by the Board.
  4. Ensure all staff are trained annually and only certify to SED if all staff completes training required by law.

# Building-Level Emergency Response Plans

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## How Should a School Ensure its Emergency Response Plans Comply With the SAVE Act?

School district building-level emergency response plans should provide details about how staff and students would respond to different emergencies. The plans must include policies and procedures for evacuation, sheltering and lockdown; for review and conduct of drills and for testing components of the plan; designation of emergency response teams; floor plans and maps; and establishment of communication systems in an emergency. Each public school superintendent and each chief school administrator of an educational agency other than a public school must take action to provide written information, by October 1 of each year, to all students and staff about emergency procedures.<sup>7</sup>

Building-level plans are to be developed by a building-level emergency response team to be appointed by the building principal. Each team is required to review its plan annually, and to conduct drills to test components of the plan in coordination with local, county and State emergency responders, and coordinate its plan with the state-wide plan for disaster mental health services. The building-level emergency response team should include but need not be limited to representatives of teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel, community members, law enforcement officials, fire officials or other emergency response agencies, and other representatives the board deems appropriate.

We communicated our audit results on the 18 of the 19 schools' building-level emergency response plans<sup>8</sup> that we reviewed to school officials and SED confidentially.

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<sup>7</sup> 8 NYCRR 155.17 (g)

<sup>8</sup> For the 19th school, we only reviewed the 2018-19 district-wide school safety plan.

## Appendix A: Background Information

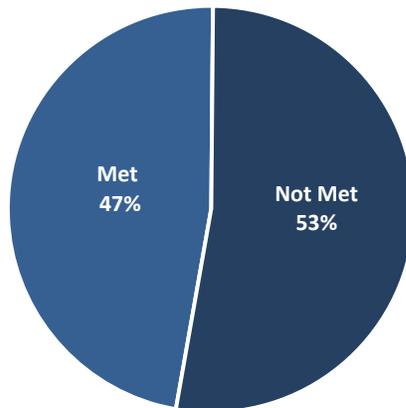
| School                                         | Total Student Enrollment | Total Staff   | Number of School Educational Buildings | Chief Emergency Officer                                        |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Argyle Central School District                 | 512                      | 125           | 1                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Candor Central School District                 | 722                      | 179           | 2                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Commack Union Free School District             | 6,144                    | 1,603         | 9                                      | Assistant Superintendent for Business                          |
| East Meadow Union Free School District         | 7,097                    | 1,241         | 9                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District   | 4,227                    | 1,164         | 6                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Genesee Community Charter School               | 219                      | 34            | 1                                      | School Leader                                                  |
| Green Tech High Charter School                 | 362                      | 65            | 1                                      | Director of Operations                                         |
| Haverstraw-Stony Point Central School District | 8,118                    | 1,544         | 9                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Hendrick Hudson Central School District        | 2,319                    | 654           | 5                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Indian River Central School District           | 3,996                    | 1,070         | 8                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Lancaster Central School District              | 5,810                    | 1,452         | 7                                      | Assistant Superintendent of Business                           |
| Levittown Union Free School District           | 7,014                    | 1,431         | 11                                     | Facilities Director                                            |
| Longwood Central School District               | 9,146                    | 2,188         | 7                                      | Director of School Safety                                      |
| Naples Central School District                 | 700                      | 173           | 2                                      | Superintendent                                                 |
| Niagara Falls City School District             | 6,980                    | 1,020         | 12                                     | Superintendent                                                 |
| Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District    | 4,832                    | 993           | 6                                      | Director of Physical Education, Health & Athletics             |
| Schenectady City School District               | 9,400                    | 1,972         | 17                                     | Chief Emergency Officer                                        |
| Syracuse City School District                  | 21,637                   | 5,262         | 35                                     | Director of Safety and Security                                |
| Wappingers Central School District             | 10,800                   | 2,134         | 15                                     | Assistant Superintendent of Compliance and Information Systems |
| <b>Totals</b>                                  | <b>110,035</b>           | <b>24,304</b> | <b>163</b>                             |                                                                |

# Appendix B: Safety Plan Requirements: Met and Not Met<sup>9</sup>

The schools' compliance rate for the 19 component requirements are as follows.

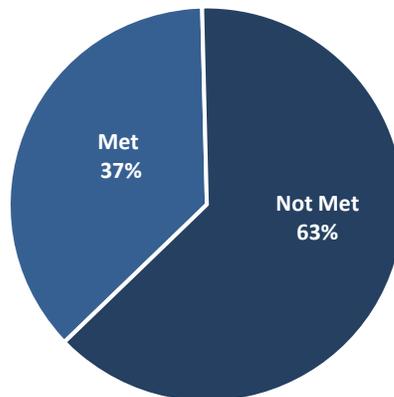
**Policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, including threats by students against themselves, including suicide.**

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



**Policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, including consideration of zero-tolerance policies for school violence.**

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**

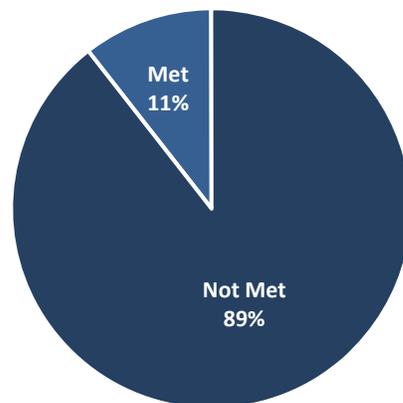


<sup>9</sup> 8 NYCRR 155.17 (c)(1); see also Education Law Section 2801-a (2)

Appropriate prevention and intervention strategies, such as:

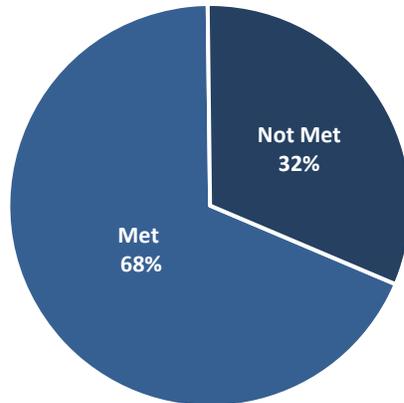
- Collaborative arrangements with State and local law enforcement officials, designed to ensure that school safety officers and other security personnel are adequately trained, including being trained to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and are effectively and fairly recruited;
- Nonviolent conflict resolution training programs;
- Peer mediation programs and youth courts; and
- Extended day and other school safety programs.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



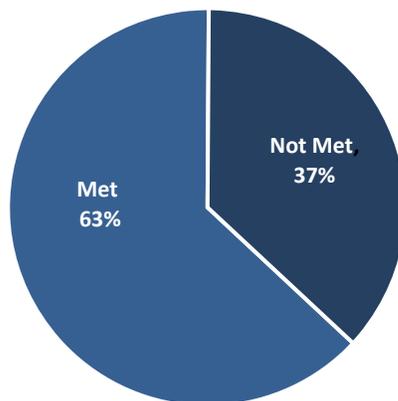
Policies and procedures for contacting appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



A description of the arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local governmental agencies.<sup>10</sup>

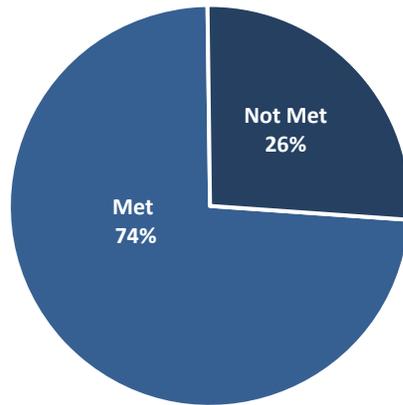
**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



<sup>10</sup> Except in a school district in a city having a population of more than one million inhabitants

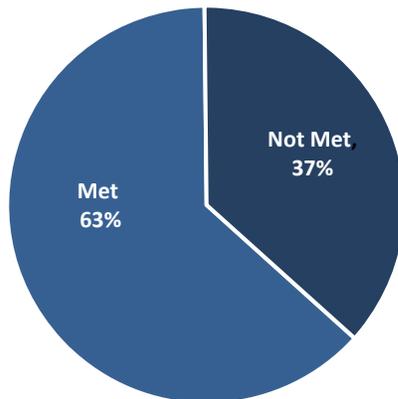
The procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials, including the county or city officials responsible for implementation of article 2-B of the Executive Law (State and Local Natural and Man-Made Disaster Preparedness).<sup>11</sup>

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



The identification of district resources which may be available for use during an emergency.<sup>12</sup>

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**

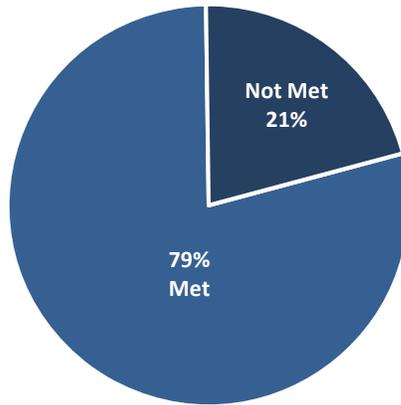


<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

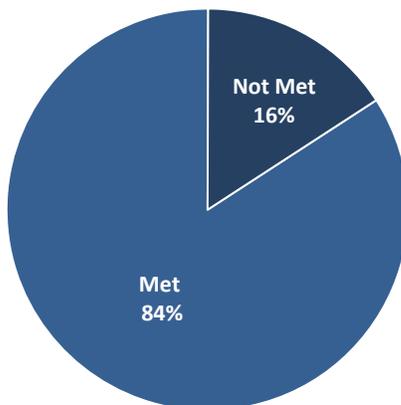
A description of procedures to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies, including identification of the officials authorized to make decisions and of the staff members assigned to provide assistance during emergencies.<sup>13</sup>

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



Policies and procedures for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students of the district in the event of a violent incident or an early dismissal.

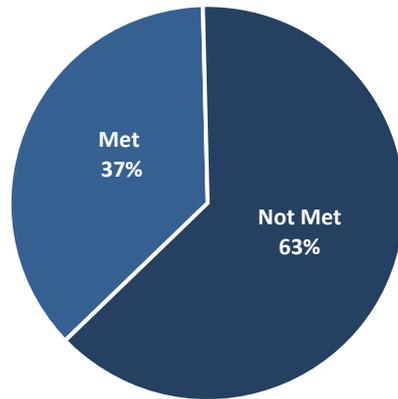
**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

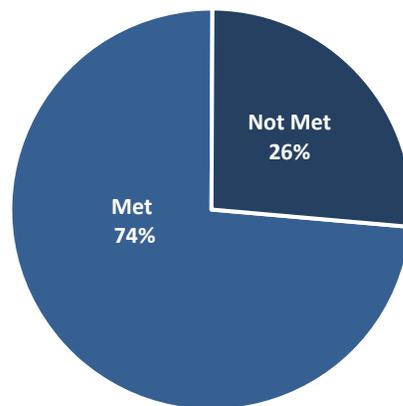
Policies and procedures for contacting parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to an individual student of the district in the event of an implied or direct threat of violence by such student against themselves, including suicide.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



Policies and procedures relating to school building security, including, where appropriate, the use of school safety officers and/or security devices or procedures.

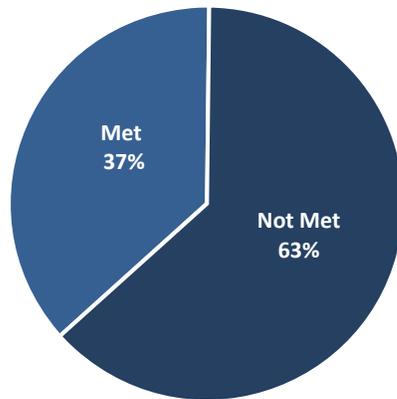
**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



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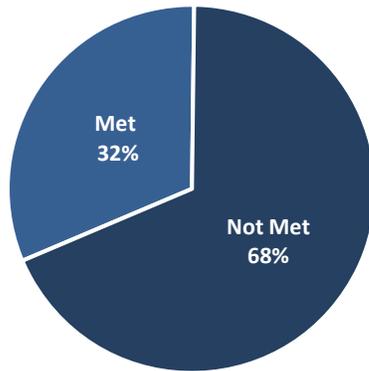
Policies and procedures for the dissemination of informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors, including but not limited to, the identification of family, community and environmental factors to teachers, administrators, parents and other persons in parental relation to students of the school district or board, students and other persons deemed appropriate to receive such information.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



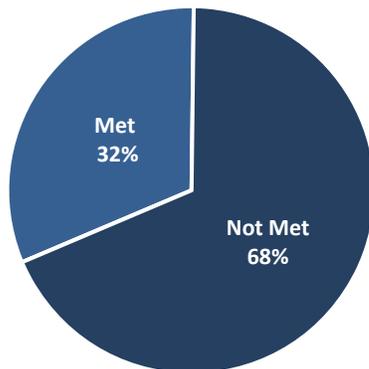
Policies and procedures for annual multi-hazard school safety training for staff and students, provided that the district must certify to the commissioner that all staff have undergone annual training by September 15, 2016 and each subsequent September 15 thereafter on the building-level emergency response plan, which must include components on violence prevention and mental health, provided further that new employees hired after the start of the school year shall receive such training within 30 days of hire or as part of the district's existing new hire training program, whichever is sooner.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



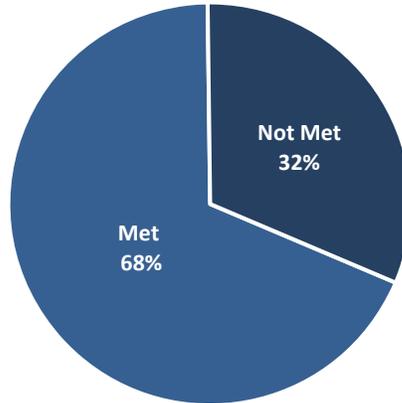
Procedures for review and the conduct of drills and other exercises to test components of the emergency response plan, including the use of tabletop exercises, in coordination with local and county emergency responders and preparedness officials.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



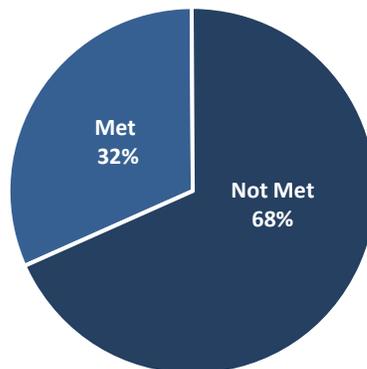
The identification of appropriate responses to emergencies, including protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage-takings, intrusions and kidnappings.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



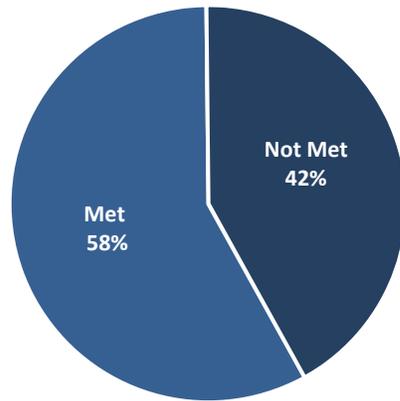
Strategies for improving communication among students and between students and staff and reporting of potentially violent incidents, such as the establishment of youth-run programs, peer mediation, conflict resolution, creating a forum or designating a mentor for students concerned with bullying or violence, and establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for school violence.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



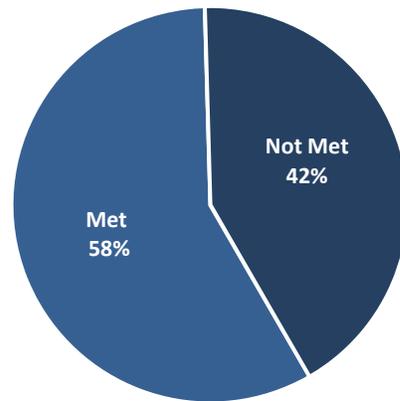
A description of the duties of hall monitors and any other school safety personnel, the training required of all personnel acting in a school security capacity, and the hiring and screening process for all personnel acting in a school security capacity.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



A system for informing all educational agencies within such school district of a disaster.<sup>14</sup>

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**

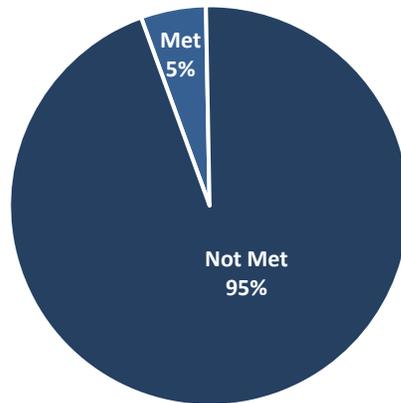


<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

The designation of the superintendent, or superintendent's designee, as the district chief emergency officer whose duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- Coordination of the communication between school staff, law enforcement and other first responders;
- Lead the efforts of the district-wide school safety team in the completion and yearly update of the district-wide school safety plan and the coordination of the district-wide plan with the building-level emergency response plans;
- Ensure staff understanding of the district-wide school safety plan;
- Ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans for each school building;
- Assist in the selection of security-related technology and development of procedures for the use of such technology;
- Coordinate appropriate safety, security and emergency training for district and school staff, including required training in the emergency response plan;
- Ensure the conduct of required evacuation and lock-down drills in all district buildings as required by Education Law section 807; and
- Ensure the completion and yearly update of building-level emergency response plans by the dates designated by the commissioner.

**Percentage of Schools  
Met or Not Met Safety Plan Requirement**



## Appendix C: Responses From School Officials

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We provided a draft copy of the global report to all 19 schools we audited and requested a response from each. We received 10 written responses. Nine schools chose not to respond (Candor Central School District, East Meadow Union Free School District, Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District, Genesee Community Charter School, Green Tech High Charter School, Haverstraw-Stony Point Central School District, Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District, Schenectady City School District and Wappingers Central School District).

Argyle, Indian River, Lancaster and Levittown officials provided comments that were specific to their own audit and were not included here. The following comments were excerpted from the six written responses that addressed the draft copy of this report.

Commack officials said: "...The Office of the New York State Comptroller reviewed the actual language found in the District level written document and its alignment with SAVE legislation language. Furthermore, the written document audited by the Comptroller's office was submitted and accepted by the State Education Department every year. The State Education Department never requested revisions or edits to the written document nor provided feedback of any kind."

Hendrick Hudson officials said: "The inclusion of specific emergency response protocols in the public-facing district safety plan, particularly those that involve crimes or other violent behavior, places the school population at a significant safety and security risk by revealing specific response steps the District would take to prevent and manage the emergency."

Longwood officials said: "...It's evident from reviewing your findings of the 17 school districts and two charter schools, that there are similarities which indicates that there is a common misunderstanding of some of the requirements..... we would like to offer the following suggestions which we feel may benefit many of the districts in New York State if implemented:

- Development of a statewide portal for the district safety plan...
- Development of a statewide online training program outlining the goals and expectations for the 11 required topics that can be tailored specifically by the district...
- The governing body for school safety should consider hosting an annual meeting or provide ongoing communication to all Chief Emergency Officers...
- Creation of a shared document ... to be used by districts to provide collaboration among safety teams members...
- Clarification on how to coordinate the district's plan with the statewide plan for disaster mental health services."

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Naples officials said: "...First, the complex topic of school safety requires a comprehensive mix of programs and practices. Although outside the parameter of the audit, it should be noted that districts across New York State have focused on priorities such as locally funding School Resource Officers (SROs), improving security-related infrastructure, adding mental health supports, and implementing restorative practices to strengthen relationships with students. The actions might not satisfy requirements found in safety plans, but they are proven strategies for enhancing both student and staff well-being. Second, the lack of consistent implementation across the State suggests the need for greater levels of consistent guidance. Because the issue of school safety is constantly evolving, ongoing direction from law enforcement agencies, State Education Department (SED), the Office of the State Comptroller, etc. would be valued greatly."

Niagara Falls officials said: "...We were evaluated against a 20 year SAVE regulation that, in many cases, may not match the needs and relevance of an Emergency Response Plan and District approach to safety in 2019. In the past 20 years, so much has changed with respect to policy procedures and protocols, we recommend a complete revisiting of this statute."

**OSC Response:** Laws of 2000, Chapter 181, Section 2801-a to the Education Law (The SAVE Act) was most recently updated in 2016.

Syracuse City School District officials said: "...The comprehensive draft audit report will serve as a platform for a district to reflect upon the components, which they have executed well, along with an objective assessment of areas, which may be in need of improvement... As the New York State Education Department guidance provided to accompany the revised regulations has been clarified it would be beneficial to provide a communication platform for districts to share their successes and desires with their peers. As each district has varying resources, we believe that a technical assistance center for emergency preparedness and training would be a viable support for consistent application of the regulations. Furthermore, the adoption of a standardized response training platform, for all districts, such as the Standard Response Protocol (SRP), would be of great value, providing consistency for students, staff and community members who may transition from one district to another."

## Appendix D: Audit Methodology and Standards

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We conducted this audit pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the State Constitution and the State Comptroller's authority as set forth in Article 3 of the New York State General Municipal Law. To achieve the audit objective and obtain valid audit evidence, our audit procedures included the following:

- We extended the scope period forward for 18 schools to January 23, 2019 and one school to April 9, 2019 to confirm that the URL submitted to SED links to the schools' safety plans.
- We judgmentally selected the 19 schools audited (see Appendix A): 18 schools based on the existence of a school safety plan requirement, student enrollment and geographical location and one school based on a taxpayer complaint.
- We interviewed school officials and reviewed policies and procedures to gain an understanding of school safety planning.
- We interviewed members of each district-wide school safety team for 2017-18; a sample was selected based on position and safety knowledge, to better understand the function of the teams and their planning process.
- We reviewed the 2017-18 district-wide school safety plans for 18 of 19 schools to determine whether they included all requirements from the school safety legislation and regulations including adoption and filing requirements as well as plan content requirements. The 19th school's 2018-19 district-wide school safety plan was reviewed for completeness of plan content requirements instead of the 2017-18 safety plan due to timing of fieldwork. The plan content requirements for all 19 schools were reported as fully met or not met.
- We reviewed the safety training offered by the schools for 2017-18 to determine whether requirements were met.

We extended the scope period back to July 1, 2016 to review the 2016-17 safety plan and building-level emergency response plans, for 18 of the 19 schools, to determine whether the plans were adopted and filed, and whether adoption and filing were timely. Because the findings were related only to adoption and filing of the plans and therefore did not include all the plan requirements, they were reported to school officials in their individual reports.

We also examined a selection of the schools' building-level emergency response plans and response team composition, at 18 of the 19 schools,<sup>15</sup> to determine whether they met the minimum requirements set forth in State law and regulations. Because of the sensitivity of this information,<sup>16</sup> we did not discuss the

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<sup>15</sup> For the 19th school, we only reviewed the 2018-19 district-wide school safety plan.

<sup>16</sup> The response plans are confidential and are not subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law (Freedom of Information Law) or any other provision of law.

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building-level response plans or response teams in this report but instead in a confidential letter to school officials.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with GAGAS (generally accepted government auditing standards). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

Unless otherwise indicated in this report, samples for testing were selected based on professional judgment, as it was not the intent to project the results onto the entire population. Where applicable, information is presented concerning the value and/or size of the relevant population and the sample selected for examination.

## Appendix E: Resources and Services

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### **Regional Office Directory**

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/regional\\_directory.pdf](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/regional_directory.pdf)

### **Cost-Saving Ideas** – Resources, advice and assistance on cost-saving ideas

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/costsavings/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/costsavings/index.htm)

### **Fiscal Stress Monitoring** – Resources for local government officials experiencing fiscal problems

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/fiscalmonitoring/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/fiscalmonitoring/index.htm)

### **Local Government Management Guides** – Series of publications that include technical information and suggested practices for local government management

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/listacctg.htm#lmgm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/listacctg.htm#lmgm)

### **Planning and Budgeting Guides** – Resources for developing multiyear financial, capital, strategic and other plans

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/planbudget/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/planbudget/index.htm)

### **Protecting Sensitive Data and Other Local Government Assets** – A non-technical cybersecurity guide for local government leaders

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/cyber-security-guide.pdf](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/cyber-security-guide.pdf)

### **Required Reporting** – Information and resources for reports and forms that are filed with the Office of the State Comptroller

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/finreporting/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/finreporting/index.htm)

### **Research Reports/Publications** – Reports on major policy issues facing local governments and State policy-makers

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/researchpubs/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/researchpubs/index.htm)

### **Training** – Resources for local government officials on in-person and online training opportunities on a wide range of topics

[www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/academy/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/academy/index.htm)

## Contact

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