



## **District-Wide School Safety Plan**

East Harlem Scholars Academies

**Effective Date: 9/1/2025**

## Introduction

East Harlem Scholars Academies is committed to fostering a safe, healthy learning environment conducive to students' academic success. As an educational organization, we are committed to providing a safe atmosphere for students to learn. This includes protection from threats, emergencies, and natural disasters. The safety plan outlines procedures to deal with these threats. This School Safety Plan is a comprehensive effort that addresses prevention, intervention, response, and recovery in the event of various emergencies or incidents that may occur in or around our schools. The plan addresses individual safety as well as community safety. School communities should be aware of resources for prevention, partnership, early intervention procedures, and the warning signs of violent incidents.

**East Harlem Scholars Academies  
District-Wide Safety Plan Academic Year 2025-2026**

*Section I: District-Wide Safety Plan Overview and Planning Guidelines*

Purpose:

The East Harlem Scholars Academies district-wide safety plan was developed under Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the East Harlem Scholars Academies School Board of Trustees, the Chief Academic Officer/Superintendent of the East Harlem Scholars Academies education corporation has appointed a school-wide School Safety team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the school-wide Safety Plan.

*Identification of School Teams*

East Harlem Scholars Academies has established a District-Wide School Safety Team pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 (b)(14) consisting of the following team members and their positions or affiliations:

Staff Name	Position or Affiliation	CPR Certified
Max Turner	Managing Director of Operations	Yes
Barbara Hannah	Director of Operations, Scholars Academy	Yes
Vicola Hutchinson	Director of Operations, Scholars II	
Vernessa Robinson	Director of Operations, Scholars High	Yes
Ingrid Sotelo	Chief Operating Officer	
Danielle Del Valle	Senior Director, School Culture and Family Engagement	
Stephon Strong	School Safety Agent	Yes
Maria Rodriguez	School Safety Agent	Yes

Responsibilities of the School Safety Committee

The committee will function as a risk management team with the responsibility to assess the susceptibility of threats and recommend preventative measures necessary for our school community. The committee will meet monthly, and the minutes of each meeting will be disseminated to each school for review and follow-up. An agenda will be established before each session. The committee will maintain responsibility for auditing the Safety Plan of each school site to determine its effectiveness and vulnerability. Primary responsibilities will include:

- Recommend trainings for students and staff in threat prevention and mitigation.

- Developing and disseminating information about early detection of potentially threatening behaviors and response plans.
- Analyzing past incidents of threats and existing records to identify trends and patterns that could indicate the source of threats.
- Assess the threat potential of all buildings as part of the compliance and safety audit.
- School building inspection results indicate improved security measures need to be implemented.
- Assessing the potential for incidents in school buildings by conducting annual student and staff surveys.

### Concept of Operations.

The District-Wide School Safety Plan, is directly associated with the school building's individual Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. This District-Wide School Safety Plan will guide the development and implementation of Building-Level Safety Plans.

The methodology used to develop the district-wide plan involved forming the school safety team. Members used the sample plan in the "Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans" to address the preparedness efforts in the following areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.

At all times, the principal will lead the first response at the school to any emergency and will activate the Emergency Response Team. Immediately upon activation of the Emergency Response Team, the Director of Operations or their designee will notify local authorities. Additional resources can be arranged as needed.

### Plan Review and Public Comment

The plan was amended in April 2025.

A copy of the District-wide School Safety Plan, including any amendments, must be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days following adoption following the review and approval of the board of trustees.

This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and maintained by the District-Wide School Safety Team. The required review will occur annually on or before July 1st of each academic year.

While linked to the district-wide safety plan, building-level safety plans remain confidential. The documents are not to be disclosed under Article 6 or any other provision of law under Education Law Section 2801-a.

## *Section II: Risk Reduction/Prevention and Intervention Strategies*

### Prevention/Intervention Strategies

#### *Program Initiatives*

Certified instructors in Non-violent Crisis Intervention strategies lead annual trainings in conjunction with the school culture team and select staff. In addition, Students who may be exhibiting unsafe behaviors will be referred through the school's social work referral system for further evaluation. Trends of these behaviors will be reviewed on a monthly basis by the building council.

- All prevention training activities will be coordinated by the school for scholars and staff.
- Caregivers will receive information on how to recognize potentially threatening behaviors.
- A school community member can make recommendations should a scholar need additional support. The situation will be discussed with our school leadership and culture team for the appropriate next action steps.

### Training, Drills, and Exercises

Under Section 1.55.17(e)(1) (xiv), East Harlem Scholars Academies will provide multi-hazard school training for instructional and non-instructional staff members and scholars through full-scale drills and professional development opportunities.

#### *Review and Conduct of Drills*

Annual and monthly drills and exercises will be conducted in each school regarding emergency response procedures to ensure all scholars and staff are trained in response to the following drills and/or exercises:

- Fire Drills
- Sheltering, Evacuation, Lock-down Drills
- Rapid Dismissal Drills
- Code Blue (CPR/AED Drills)<sup>1</sup>
- Other Drills as Assigned by the Emergency Response Team

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<sup>1</sup> **Code Blue Protocol**

A location will be announced during an emergency where a person cannot breathe (e.g., "Code Blue Room 102"). CPR-certified staff members will be dispatched to the scene to offer CPR assistance.

### *Frequency and Monitoring*

- In accordance with Education Law 807, the building Principal or designee will conduct 12 fire drills per school year, eight of those drills will be conducted between September 1st through December 31st.
- A record of each fire drill will be kept on-site at each building by the Director of Operations.

### *Fire Drill Procedures/Fire Safety Protocols*

#### **East Harlem Scholars Academy Charter School Emergency Response Team**

Position or Affiliation	Role
Director of Operations	School Safety Team Head
Building Principal	School Safety Team Member
Director of School Culture and Family Engagement	School Safety Team Member
School Safety Agent	School Safety Team Member
Lead Social Worker	School Safety Team Member
Deputy Director, Facilities	School Safety Team Member
Managing Director, Operations	School Safety Team Member

When a fire is detected the proper notification is activated.

The proper notification includes

1. Pulling the fire alarm
2. Calling 911

In case of an emergency, the fire alarm will sound. All scholars should prepare to exit their classrooms by lining up at the door quickly and quietly. Teachers with classes should now take the red folder with rosters and red/green cards from the door.

Evacuation routes are specified in each school's individual building-level emergency response plan. Evacuations routes are designed to take students a safe distance from the building where a danger has been identified and minimize crossing of traffic.

## **Safety Wardens**

- During fire and evacuation procedures, each floor will have “Safety Wardens” who
  - are responsible for:
  - Quickly assessing whether or not there are any blocked exits during an evacuation or fire drill
  - Directing and ushering student and staff flow in evacuation
  - Sweeping classrooms and other rooms to determine no students or staff remain
  - Ensuring that all doors are completely shut
  - Communicating “floor by floor” (“All clear” code) or any concerns via walkie talkie
  - Facilities team members will be assigned to open the exits and block traffic at any intersections that must be crossed.
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- Facilities manager/DOO will walkie the safety response team “All Clear” to verify that everyone has made it out of the building.
  - Wardens will radio “All Present” once all teachers have verified attendance in their school.
  - Director of Operations will send a “Safe to Return” signal if and when it is safe to return to the building.
  - Direct communication with FDNY will be handled by Director of Operations.

## **Relocation**

In the event that East Harlem Scholars Academies’ scholars and staff are unable to re-enter the East Harlem Education Complex, all scholars will walk to an alternate location identified in each school’s building-level emergency response plan. Each school has identified two locations and contacts that are within safe walking distance for students and have spaces that are large enough to accommodate the entire school.

For Scholars Academy, relocation location is:

2017 First Avenue  
New York, NY 10029

For Scholars Academy High School, relocation location is:

2050 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10029

For Scholars Academy II, relocation location is:

2017 First Avenue  
New York, NY 10029

### School Safety/School Security

Upon entering each facility, a security representative checks and approves all visitors, patrols the facility, and checks the security cameras. Training in de-escalation, multi-hazard procedures, and incident command system, developed and provided by the Senior Director, Operations the [New York State Center for School Safety](#), [FEMA](#), and [the New York State Safe Schools Against Violence in Education \(SAVE\)](#), will be given to all members of the School Safety Team.

#### *Visitor Pass Sign-In and Sign-out System*

All visitors will be required to sign in and out and provide a valid form of identification upon entering the building. All visitors will receive a name tag and will be asked to fill in their names and destination.

### Vital Education Agency Information

As required by Section 155.17(e)(l)(xx), East Harlem Scholars Academies collects and maintains essential educational information, including student enrollment, grade spans, staff numbers, room usage, and classroom scheduling, and assignments.

### **Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behavior**

#### *Training of Scholars and Staff*

The EHSA Safety Team will make recommendations for appropriate annual trainings for staff and schools in risk management and mitigation prevention. Training will include early warning signs of potential threatening behavior and early intervention/prevention strategies. Training will be conducted by internal staff, governing agencies, and consultants. Training for scholars and staff will be conducted upon hire and annually thereafter, and include:

- Trainings by SAVE (an anti-violence group) to plan and host anti-violence workshops for all scholars
- Additional trainings will be provided by the NYS Center for School Safety and FEMA
- A description and internal training on the School Safety Plan
- Information about how to report incidents of violence, including threats and verbal abuse.
- Recognizing and responding to school security hazards.
- Review of school violence prevention measures and other threats, including security equipment procedures and methods of diffusing emergency situations.



- In addition to medical follow-up, counseling is available post-incident, as needed
- Staff training in AED, CPR, and fire safety
- Social work and culture teams' outreach
- Conflict resolutions and positive school climate
- Messaging systems i.e., PowerSchool, BlackBoard, Slack, and Google Chat

### Hazard Identification

A Building-Level School Safety Team is responsible for each building's emergency response plan. Examine the potential sites of emergency that may impact individual school buildings, i.e., recess areas, neighboring properties, and off-site athletic venues. Specifically defined areas of concern include exits for scholars and staff to enter and exit the building, and visitors adhering to building entry protocols.

### Section III: Emergency Response Procedures

The Emergency Response Plan located at the main office contains protocols for each site. During an emergency, information will be coordinated between the Principals and the Director of Operations. Our school leadership team and public authorities should access this information to facilitate decision-making.

#### Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communication)

School safety will be a priority. It is critical to reaching the appropriate law enforcement agencies in an emergency as soon as possible. The school will cultivate relationships and maintain contact with these agencies.

Staff and students will be encouraged to report potentially violent incidents as follows:

Scholars and Staff will report to the principal or designee verbally or in writing. Anonymous reports can also be submitted.

Relationships have been established with the NYPD, and outreach will continue. The principal or designee will receive and respond to any incident reports, including anonymous messages, and immediately call 911. Each incident will be reported to the School Safety Team, who will respond accordingly.

#### *Internal Communication*

Our school staff will continue utilize Slack and email for non-emergency communication, and PA system and walkies for urgent emergency situations.

#### *Notification to Caregivers*

The senior leadership and/or executive leadership team will communicate all communication to families regarding school incidents and updates using our mass messaging application via phone, email, and text message.

## Reporting

The Principal or Designee will assume responsibility for incidents once they are reported, depending on their severity:

- Contact the Managing Director, Operations for support and guidance on the next steps.
- Contact the NYPD depending on the severity of the incident.
- Protect the area where the disturbance occurred
- As soon as possible, ensure the physical safety and medical care of scholars/staff in the area
- During the response to the incident, ensure that the remaining scholars remain adequately supervised and secure.
- Inspect the area quickly to determine if there is any damage caused by the incident and if it is safe to remain. As required by the emergency response plan, evacuate or seek shelter.
- As needed, provide students/staff with an incident debriefing. Inform caregivers.

## Situational Responses

A shelter, lockdown, evacuation, or early dismissal may be appropriate responses. Detailed incident reports and accident reports will be documented for each occurrence, including any injuries requiring medical treatment or the involvement of law enforcement.

Multi-Hazard Response: According to Section 155.17(e)(l)(xiv) and (xv), the East Harlem Scholars Academies District-Wide Safety Plan outlines the school's multi-hazard response plans i.e. Civil Disturbances, Environmental Problems, Fire and Explosion, Systems Failures, and Medical Emergencies.

### Response to Civil Disturbances

The school leadership team will make the appropriate decisions to ensure the school's safety. When necessary, the following responses will be taken: shelter, lockdown, and evacuation. The emergency response team at each site will determine until the authorities arrive. Additionally, including incidents related to bomb threats, kidnapping, hostage-taking, and intruders. 911 will be contacted as the first line of protocol. Parents will be contacted and informed via text messaging and phone calls.

Bomb Threats - The school administrators will be provided with information on the [Bomb Threat Standards](#) and will utilize the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency [Bomb Call Checklist](#) in making a determination of the exact nature of the situation. The following procedures will be followed in the event of a bomb threat:

- A variety of actions will be considered, including searches, evacuations, sheltering, and early release.
- Phone calls and text messages will be sent to parents.
- Call 911 as soon as possible.

## Hostage Taking

The following procedures will be followed in the event of a hostage situation:

- When the situation is discovered, the first person aware will contact the principal's office and the operations team.
- Emergency services will be contacted immediately.
- A school principal or designee will issue the appropriate alert and isolate the area if necessary.
- When the police arrive at the scene, the school principal or designee will hand over the authority to them and assist as needed.
- A text message and a phone call will be sent to the parents.

## Intrusions

The following procedures will be implemented in the event of an intrusion:

- The principal's office should be notified immediately of any intruders or suspicious individuals.
- Intruders are approached by security officers to determine the reason for their visit and to obtain identification.
- Individuals whose purpose cannot be determined by school personnel will be directed to the appropriate office or asked to leave. The security department ensures that the individual(s) has left the building/property. To prevent unauthorized reentry, staff will be alerted.
- Inform the individual(s) that they have violated the law, and 911 will be called immediately.
- Should the situation escalate, an alert will be issued, and the PA system will be activated to initiate a lockdown.
- As necessary, the facility will be evacuated.
- A lockdown will be notified to parents via text message, phone call, and letter.

## Missing Child

- During school hours, when a scholar has already been documented as present, the first person aware of a kidnapping or missing scholar will immediately notify the Director of Operations and the principal's office who will obtain the student's information. School building staff will search the building and also utilize all internal forms of communication.
- Notify the parent/guardian if the scholar(s) is/are not found after the school search.
- Contact 911 immediately.
- The school principal will turn over the investigation to the police upon arrival and assist as requested.
- No information is to be released to the media.
- Parents will be notified immediately when the child is located.
- Parents will be contacted via text messages and phone calls.

## Responses to Fire and Explosions

There are several emergencies, including false fire alarms, fires, and explosions. School buildings can be disrupted by fire, explosions, or even false alarms. False alarms can have minor effects, but they could also have significant consequences, as in the case of one that went off accidentally in a fire or explosion. In each case, the guiding principles are: Life must be protected first, then the property must be preserved, and finally, the property must be restored to normal operations.

## Responses to Systems Failure

In a building's structural or mechanical failure, normal building operations will be interrupted and disrupted. Malfunctions and losses may be minor, temporary, easily rectified, or severe and require extensive or extended repairs. Various types of emergency guidelines are provided in this section, from minor to major incidents, including electrical failure, energy loss or loss of heat, roof failure (leak), sewage system failure, water system failure, and gas leaks. In each case, the guiding principles are: Life must be protected first, then the property must be preserved, and finally, the property must be restored to normal operations.

## Responses to Medical Emergency

A medical emergency is the result of a minor or major illness or injury to an individual(s) and can be of such severity as to be life-threatening or merely cause the victim discomfort or pain. Emergency guidelines are included in this section for the following:

- Allergic Reaction
- Animal Bite Bleeding

- Blow to the Head
- Broken Bones
- Bums
- Choking
- Diabetic Shock
- Drowning
- Electric Shock
- Epidemic Epileptic Convulsions
- Food Poisoning
- Head Lice
- Heart Attack Respiratory Arrest
- School Bus Accident and/or Fire Shock Chemical/Toxic Exposure

Provide appropriate emergency care until a medical expert is available or arrange for parental supervision. Emergency treatment cannot be extended beyond that which will protect the scholar:

- Signed instructions for emergencies from parents, and /or legal guardians should be available, including the name and date of birth of the child; name, address, and telephone number where one or both parents may be reached at home and at work; name, address, and telephone number of another person who has agreed to care for the child if the parent or guardian cannot be reached; name, address, and telephone number of the family physician, a list of medical problems, allergies, and daily medication needs, and any special condition which should require special handling.
- The Principal/Designee will ensure that all school personnel and students are informed of the location of the school nurse. The telephone numbers of specific emergency services and individuals will be posted conspicuously near each telephone. These may include school physicians, fire departments, police, hospital, ambulance, poison control center, etc.
- A list will be maintained by the nurse of all scholars and staff having special medical problems such as hypersensitivity to allergens, diabetes, epilepsy, allergy to bee stings, etc.
- Written instructions on first aid procedures will be available to all school personnel. Each teacher should have a copy in his or her room for reference. Copies will be posted in the health office, food services area, maintenance department, and administrative office.

## Responses to Implied or Direct Threat/Acts of Violence

In accordance with Section 155.17(e)(l)(iii), the East Harlem Scholars Academies District-wide Safety Plan includes policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by scholars, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school. East Harlem Scholars Academies maintains a high standard of behavior from its scholars, faculty and staff as well as visitors to the school facility and grounds.

In the event of an implied or direct threat of violence, the following protocol will be implemented:

- The threat will be reported to the Principal or their designee, either directly or through a member of the school staff.
- The Principal or their designee will immediately investigate the report of an implied or direct threat. Such investigation will involve interviewing witnesses to the threat, including students and/or staff, as appropriate to the nature of the threat.
- The Principal will use the information collected during the initial investigation to make a determination as to the threat's degree of severity. Input from school-based mental health professionals, as well as the prior behavior of the individual implying or issuing the threat, will be considered in making this determination.
- If the threat's degree of severity is determined to be minor, the individual implying or issuing the threat will be provided with a warning. If the individual is a student, his/her parent or guardian will be contacted by the Principal or their designee and will document the incident in a letter to the parent or guardian.
- If the threat's degree of severity is determined to be major, the local law enforcement agency will be notified and asked for their assistance in completing the investigation and addressing the implied or direct threat. The student will be suspended from school for a period of time consistent with the school's Code of Conduct. Parent contact and written documentation will be implemented for a minor threat.

## Responses to Acts of Violence

East Harlem Scholars Academies have adapted the following protocol in the event of an act of violence:

- The act of violence will be reported immediately to the Principal or his/her designee.
- The Principal or their designee will respond immediately to the act of violence, depending upon the nature of the violent act, in a manner that attempts to ensure the safety of all students and adults in the building. Based upon the available information, this may include reporting to the location of the violent act and addressing the violent act, implementing efforts to isolate the individual if possible, as appropriate. It may also involve initiating the procedures for a building lockdown or "shelter in place" procedure and contacting area police agencies to request their assistance.
- Once the area has been secured either by the school or police personnel, depending upon the violent incident, the police personnel and/or the Principal or his designee will immediately investigate the act of violence. For the Principal or their designee, such investigation will involve interviewing witnesses to the act of violence, including students and/or staff, as appropriate to the nature of the violent incident.
- If the individuals involved are scholars, their parents or guardians will be contacted by the Principal or their designee and will document the incident in a letter to the parent or guardian. The students will be suspended from school for a period consistent with the school's Code of Conduct. In consultation with area police agencies, legal action against the individuals committing the act of violence may be pursued, depending upon the nature of the incident.



#### *Section IV: Recovery*

Responses for different types of crises should be planned in advance and reviewed, updated, and practiced periodically. The extent of, and need for, disaster or emergency recovery depends in large part upon the nature of the incident. the East Harlem Scholars Academies Board of Trustees and the centralized executive management administration will provide the necessary resources to ensure as smooth a transition back to normal operations as possible following an emergency or violent incident.

##### **District Support for Buildings**

The network operations team will support the Emergency Response Team in emergencies or disasters by providing physical resources, human resources, and logistical assistance to each school site in the network. The communications team will also aid the team by interfacing with relevant regulatory agencies and the media.

##### **Investigation:**

After the incident has occurred the School Safety Team will conduct a detailed investigation. It is the purpose of the Team to focus on facts that may prevent a recurrence, not find fault. The Team conducting the investigation will:

- Collect facts on how the incident occurred.
- Record information.
- Identify contributing causes.
- Recommend corrective action.
- Encourage appropriate follow-up.
- Consider changes in controls, policy, and procedures.

##### **Follow-up:**

The education corporation recognizes the importance of responding quickly and appropriately to the medical and psychological needs of scholars/staff following exposure to a violent incident. All individuals affected by a violent act in the school will be provided with appropriate medical and psychological treatment and follow-up. Provisions for medical confidentiality and protection from discrimination will be included to prevent the victims of violent incidents from suffering further loss.

#### Evaluation:

The School Safety Team is responsible for ensuring that an initial school building security analysis is conducted and periodically re-evaluated. These physical evaluations will focus on the identification and assessment of school building security hazards and address necessary changes in building practices. These evaluations will review the potential for different types of violent incidents including bomb threats, hostage-and private consultants as necessary.

## *APPENDICES*

### Appendix I: Listing of all School Buildings Covered by the District-Wide School Safety Plan

#### **East Harlem Scholars Academy**

2050 Second Avenue  
New York, New York 10029  
(212) 348-2518

#### **East Harlem Scholars Academy II**

1573 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10029  
(212) 897-2897

#### **East Harlem Scholars Academy High School**

2017 First Avenue  
New York, New York 10029  
(212) 897-2897