

# **Cato-Meridian Central School District**

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

**Education Law 2801-a and Commissioner's Regulation 155.17**

**Adopted: 8/26/2024**

### **Introduction**

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditiously and effective manner. School districts are required to develop a District-Wide School Safety Plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies.

The District-Wide Plan is responsive to the needs of all programs within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. School districts are at risk of a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and technological disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. This component of 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 its schools.

The Cato-Meridian Central School District continues to support this integral component of the SAVE Legislation through the regular review and updating of its contents. The Superintendent of Schools encourages and advocates this ongoing District-Wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE.

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**SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES**

**A. Purpose**

The Cato-Meridian Central School District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Education Law 2801-a and Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the District Superintendent, the Cato-Meridian Board of Education appointed a District-Wide School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the District-Wide School Safety Plan.

**B. Identification of School Teams**

As referenced in the previous section, the Cato-Meridian Board of Education has appointed a District-Wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the School Board, faculty, administration, parents, school safety personnel, and other school personnel. The members of the team and their positions or affiliations are as follows:

<b>Member’s Name Position of Affiliation</b>
Terry Ward - Superintendent of Schools
Elizabeth Kupiec - Assistant Superintendent
Mark Lovell - Guard (School Resource Officer)
David Dominick - Guard (School Resource Officer)
Danielle Mahoney - Elementary School Principal
Jennifer Kelly - Junior-Senior High School Principal

Robert Wren - Athletic Director/Student Services
Joseph Phillips - Director of Facilities
Lucas Smith - Director of Technology
Charissa Allen - Nurse – Junior-Senior High School

Alexis Lindsley - Nurse – Elementary School

Tammy Cady - Head Bus Driver

Kimberly Bratt - Recreation Center Director

Kathleen Bratt - Board of Education President
Jenny Kyle - Board of Education Member
Timothy Hulbert - Board of Education Vice President
Jack Mekeel - BOCES Safety Coordinator
Trevor Cady - C-M Parent Representative
Ronnie Wallace - Senior Custodian/EMT/Cato Fire Dept.
Debbie Wallace - EMT/Cato Fire Dept.

Chelsey McLain - C-M Parent Representative for Disabled Students

### **C. Concept of Operations**

General protocols reflected in the District-Wide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan (BERP). The District-Wide Safety Plan sets forth the general procedures and protocols to be adhered to at each school and serve as the standard operating procedures.

In developing the District-Wide Plan, key internal and external stakeholders were involved in order to garner the best local operational knowledge and the best emergency management and safety expertise in creating and revising the Plan. The Cato-Meridian CSD is an integral part of the community and, as such, it is important that community stakeholders are involved and

understand the role of the school district and its relationship to the safety of the community at large.

In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at an individual school will be by the Building Emergency Response Team.

Upon activation of the Building Emergency Response Team, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified. Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols.

#### Chief Emergency Officer

Terry Ward, Superintendent of Schools, is the Cato-Meridian CSD Chief Emergency Officer. The responsibilities of the Chief Emergency officer are:

- Coordinating communication between school staff and first responders
- Ensuring understanding of the District-Wide Safety Plan
- Ensuring completion of the BERPs
- Ensuring the amendment of all plans as needed

#### Guard (School Resource Officer)

The Plan will be maintained and controlled by the Guards (School Resource Officers). Any changes would be brought to the Board of Education for review and adoption.

If the Superintendent of Schools is unavailable or not on site, the School Resource Officers will act in his/her absence with the same authority and responsibility.

### **D. Plan Review and Public Comment**

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e)(3), this District-Wide Plan will be made available for public comments at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The Plan may be adopted by the Board of Education only after at least one public hearing that provides for the

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participation of school personnel, parents, students, and other interested parties. The Plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

The District-Wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption. In addition, the BERPs will be sent to the New York State Police and the Cayuga County Sheriff's Department. This Plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the District-Wide Safety Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before September 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the Plan will be available on the District website.

## **SECTION II: RISK REDUCTION/PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

### **A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies**

Initiatives that improve the culture and climate in our schools and improve communication at all levels can substantially enhance our ability to truly prevent any negative event from occurring. Prevention would always be preferred over risk reduction. However, not all such events will be prevented despite our best efforts. Therefore, we must formulate plans to intervene and reduce risk by minimizing the impact of any negative event.

This section will identify specific prevention and risk reduction strategies that have been implemented within Cato-Meridian CSD. Many of these components serve as both prevention and risk reduction tools.

#### Program Initiatives

The Cato-Meridian CSD recognizes the importance of programs and activities that improve the school climate and communication throughout the school community and that encourages the reporting of potentially dangerous, suspicious, or violent behavior. Such efforts serve to improve the security, safety, and quality of life for all those in the Cato-Meridian CSD school community. The following is a partial list of such current initiatives:

- Assemblies are provided throughout the year in each building of the District to discuss pertinent issues with ALL STUDENTS K-12.
  - Increased awareness and tolerance training
  - Orientation to Code of Conduct
  - Hall monitoring
- Interventions by teachers, counselors, psychologists, aides and monitors, SROs, and administrators
  - Increased awareness training for staff on detection of potentially violent tendencies
- Safe Schools Curriculum
  - Orientation to counseling services available for staff and students
- Advisory/Counseling
  - Non-violence training programs
- Peer mediation
- Character Education
  - Implemented with tolerance training
  - Self-respect and self-esteem training for staff and students
  - Peer mediation training for staff and students in Grades K-12
  - HS Youth court

- Positivity Project (P2)
- S.A.V.A.R. (Sexual Assault Victims Advocate Resource) of Cayuga County
- T.C.I. (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention)
- Peaceful Schools
  - Social Emotional Learning Interventionist
  - Restorative Practices
- Programs from SAFE SCHOOLS/HEALTHY STUDENTS
  - Juvenile Intensive Supervision Team (J.I.S.T.)
  - M.O.S.T. SS/HS
  - Filial M.O.S.T. SS/HS
  - Therapeutic crisis Intervention
  - Safe Dates
  - Guiding Good Choices
- DASA/Anti-Bullying – Grades K-12
  
- Workplace Violence Prevention Program

The Cato-Meridian CSD encourages its leadership to develop strategies that support a positive safe learning environment for students, such as community involvement in the schools, mentoring programs, or adjusting scheduling to minimize potential for conflicts or altercations.

#### Training, Drills, and Exercises

- The Cato-Meridian CSD will provide annual multi-hazard school safety training for all staff and students. The components of this training will be consistent across the district while the means of dissemination will likely be varied due to the specific needs of program participants involved within each building. Staff training will be routinely conducted at the beginning of the school year and will be followed by drills that include the entire school population.
  
- The Cato-Meridian CSD will conduct drills and exercises to test the components of the BERPs. The use of tabletop exercises to accomplish this task in coordination with local and county emergency response and preparedness officials may be considered when live drills are impractical or not sufficient to meet training goals. At a minimum, eight evacuation

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drills (fire drills) and four lockdown drills will be conducted each school year.

- The SROs will monitor and evaluate the drills for completeness and

thoroughness.

- In addition, an annual early dismissal drill will occur, not more than 15 minutes earlier than normal dismissal time. Transportation and communication procedures will be included in the test, and parents and guardians will be notified in writing at least one week prior to such drill.
- The emergency back-up generator and lighting systems are also tested annually and all systems are verified functional without electricity.
  - Annual training on BERP by September 15 which must provide training, including components on violence protection and mental health.

### Implementation of School Safety

- Routine Precautions by All Staff
  - o All staff are expected to immediately report to their building principal and the SRO's any information they have received or observations they have made regarding anything that could possibly impact the safety and security of anyone within the school community.
  - o Note: Staff should always err on the side of safety and share such information each and every time. No detail is too small or inconsequential as individual staff may not be aware of all circumstances surrounding a particular student or concern.
- Limited Access
  - o The Cato-Meridian CSD is tasked with implementation of this policy while tailoring it to specific needs of each building. Generally, this means that the fewest exterior doors necessary to maintain normal business will remain unlocked during portions of the regular school day – most commonly to facilitate morning arrival. Those doors that may need to remain unlocked during a portion of the school/business day should be monitored in some fashion. All entrances are to be secured shortly after the start of the instructional day. Once secured for the instructional day, the District utilizes an audio and video electronic, visitor access control system at their primary entrances that provide a means for school staff to remotely screen and approve visitors prior to actually granting them access into the building.
  - o The District also utilizes a keyless entry/electronic access control system at designated doors allowing specific access (designated

days/times, and entrances) to authorized personnel by presenting a programmed proximity identification card to a reading device at those entrances. This system also automatically unlocks and locks specific entrances to accommodate normal arrival, dismissal, and after school activity.

- Staff Photo Identification Badges

- All Cato-Meridian CSD employees are issued photo identification (proximity) badges that are to be displayed at all times while on school district property to assist visitors, students, and staff in identifying employees as well as possible intruders.

- Visitor Policy

- The BERP will provide specific policy related to how visitors are handled at each building. Should an unannounced visitor appear at a classroom, office or be observed in the hallways without proper identification (visitor pass or note from the office), staff may approach and inquire as to a subject's business or contact their school's main office immediately.

- Student Sign-Out Procedures

- Schools are diligent in ensuring that only those persons authorized to sign-out students are allowed to do so utilizing the applicable data maintained within School Tool. Staff may also require a photo ID if the requesting party is unknown to them and may contact a parent or guardian for confirmation when deemed appropriate.

- Video Surveillance

- A digital video surveillance system is in service at all Cato-meridian CSD facilities to assist in monitoring, deterring, and recording activity in high use areas of chronic concern or perceived vulnerability.

- Fire Alarm

- A fire detection alarm that is linked to a central monitoring station is in-service at all Cato-Meridian CSD facilities. These alarms and fire response procedures are tested regularly consistent with New York State Education Department regulations.

### Vital Educational Agency Information

The Cato-Meridian CSD maintains general information about each educational agency located in the BOCES service area, including information on: school population, number of staff, SRO's, transportation needs, and the business and home telephone numbers of key officials of each such educational agency.

### **B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors**

The District recognizes the importance of early recognition and intervention into conflicts and potentially violent or threatening behaviors. As such, the District will ensure that appropriate school violence prevention and intervention training will be incorporated into all phases of staff professional development.

Informative materials regarding the early detection of potentially violent behaviors shall be made available to the school community through various means that may include brochures, district-wide newsletters, and the district website.

Students, parents, and all staff are encouraged to share information regarding any student conflicts, threats or troubling behaviors with the appropriate school administrator and/or the SRO so that an investigation can commence in a timely fashion if deemed necessary.

To assist students, parents, and community, the District has a 100% anonymous Tip line via Google Forms in place on the C-M website for reporting violent behavior or information about bullying, drug use, vaping, suspicious or potential criminal activity, or any other important information they need to share.

This tip information may be, confidentially, shared beyond Cato-Meridian CSD personnel to include members of law enforcement, mental health professionals, the District Safety Team, etc., when deemed appropriate and within existing legal parameters.

### **C. Hazard Identification**

The list of sites of potential emergency include: all school buildings, playground areas, properties adjacent to schools, buses, and off-site field trips. The School Safety Team has assessed Cato-Meridian CSD facilities for unique hazards and has documented them in the

#### **D. Construction and Capital Project Safety**

Each school under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Facilities, as well as the involved construction manager (if applicable) will take steps to ensure the safety and security of the students and staff during periods of construction. This requirement may include background checks on workers, maintaining sufficient and appropriate emergency egress routes, and notifying building occupants of any changes. The School Resource Officers (SROs) will monitor such projects for safety issues and address them, as needed.

The District Safety Team, or a subcommittee thereof, will be involved in monitoring safety during construction projects, as needed. The subcommittee may include architects, construction managers, and contractors. The subcommittee may hold additional meetings, as needed, to review issues and address complaints related to health and safety resulting from construction projects.

#### **SECTION III: RESPONSE**

##### **A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)**

Incident Commanders are authorized to and will initiate contact with the appropriate law enforcement officials in the event of a violent incident. The district maintains a list of local law enforcement agencies, and the designation of the individual who is authorized to contact the law enforcement agencies. The responding law Enforcement Officers have been provided access cards to the school buildings.

The process for informing educational agencies within a school district of a disaster or an act of violence include the following forms of communication: telephone, email, district radio system, NOAA weather radio, district website, intercom or PA system, local media, and others as appropriate or necessary.

The system may specify that in the event of an emergency, or impending emergency, the District will notify all principals/SROs within the district to take the appropriate action. The Superintendent of Schools will utilize media outlets to contact parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to the students in the event of a violent incident or early dismissal.

##### **B. Situational Response**

## Multi-Hazard Response

In the event of a catastrophic emergency (fire, building collapse, etc.) the evacuation of the building and the preservation of life is the only consideration. It is anticipated that specific procedures outlined in this document, particularly as they relate to notifications, line of authority, etc., may well be violated in cases involving catastrophic emergencies.

There are many variables that could impact the manner in which the Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) responds to a particular occurrence. These variables could include: time of day, weather, age of students, physical abilities, location of students, anticipated response time of emergency responders, availability of support personnel, and availability of transportation. Specific emergency situations are identified and standard response procedures are detailed in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. However, given the aforementioned variables, it is impractical to try and map out the specific steps to take for every conceivable scenario. It is more practical to focus on just a few critical decisions that need to be made in every emergency pursuant to our primary goal of preventing injury and loss of life.

The Superintendent of Schools is designated as the person in charge – the Incident Commander – during the initial response to any emergency in the District. The Superintendent of Schools will provide leadership, organize activities and disseminate information with the assistance of the BERT, if needed.

In most instances where the level of school response is warranted, the District will be seeking assistance from outside emergency responders in resolving the situation. As such, the immediate objective is generally to contain and manage the incident until the emergency responders arrive on scene.

Procedures for obtaining advice and assistance from local government officials, including state and county officials responsible for implementation of Article 2-B of the Executive Law: By contacting 9-1-1, state, county and local agencies will be activated. The SROs will work in tandem with law enforcement to resolve issues at hand.

The Building-level Emergency Response Plans include procedures and actions that will be implemented in the event of the occurrence of a hazardous event. Such plans are not available to the public, nor are they to be included in the District-Level Safety Plan.

### Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

The District policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence, including suicide by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school, will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. The following types of procedure(s) may be used by the District:

- Immediate contact of the building School Resource Officer (SRO)
- Use of staff trained in de-escalation or other strategies to diffuse the situation
- Inform Principal of implied or direct threat
- Determine level of threat with Superintendent of Schools/Designee
- Contact appropriate law enforcement agency, if necessary
- Monitor situation, adjust response as appropriate
- Include the possible use of the BERT

### Acts of Violence

The District policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel and visitors to the school will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. The following types of procedure(s) could be used by the District:

- Determine level of threat with the Superintendent of Schools/Designee
- If situation warrants, isolate the immediate area and evacuate, if appropriate
- Inform principal and building SRO
- If necessary, initiate lockdown procedure, and contact appropriate law enforcement agency
- Monitor situation and adjust response as appropriate
- If necessary initiate early dismissal, sheltering or evacuation procedures

### Response Protocols

The District selection of appropriate responses to emergencies, including protocols for responding to bomb threats, hostage takings, intrusions and kidnappings will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans. The following possible protocols are provided as examples:

- Identification of decision-makers
- Plans to safeguard students and staff
- Procedures to provide transportation, if necessary
- Procedures to notify parents
- Procedures to notify media
- Debriefing procedures

### Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

Arrangements for obtaining assistance during emergencies from emergency services organizations and local government agencies include contacting 9-1-1 immediately. Additional support can be obtained by contacting the Cayuga County Sheriff's Department, New York State

Police, Ira Fire Department, Cato Fire Department, and the Cayuga County Emergency Management Office. SROs will meet periodically with local law enforcement. Page 12 District Resources Available for Use in an Emergency

District resources which may be available during an emergency include all of the District's vans, trucks, heavy equipment, and other vehicles. We can also contact the Town of Cato Highway Department or the Cayuga County Highway Department to request additional heavy equipment and other resources.

#### Procedures to Coordinate the Use of District Resources and Manpower during Emergencies

The Cato-Meridian CSD will use the Incident Command System to coordinate the use of school district resources and manpower during emergencies.

#### Protective Action Options

Plans for taking the following actions in response to an emergency, where appropriate, will be included in the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans:

- School cancellation
- Early dismissal
- Evacuation
- Sheltering

## **SECTION IV: RECOVERY**

### **A. District Support for Buildings**

After an incident, the District Crisis Plan will be initiated by the appropriate Building-level Emergency Response Team. Necessary resources will be deployed in order to support the Emergency Response Team and the Post-Incident Response Team.

### **B. Disaster Mental Health Services**

Mental health services needed will be addressed by the appropriate Emergency Response Team using the District Crisis Plan.

# Annex A to District Safety Plan

## Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - School Resource Officer

### Recent Changes

Recent legislative and regulatory changes to Education law 2801-a require schools to define the roles and responsibilities of school security personnel and law enforcement who are deployed in schools in response to student misconduct that violates the code of conduct. To this end, Cato-Meridian CSD has developed a written contract or memorandum of understanding (MOU) which defines the relationship between the school district, school personnel, students, and visitors with a School Resource Officer (SRO). Such a contract or MOU shall be consistent with the code of conduct, define SRO roles, responsibilities and involvement within the school, and clearly delegate the role of school discipline to the school administration. Further, said contract or MOU is in addition to the employment agreement between Cato-Meridian CSD and their SRO.

### Mission

Our mission is to encourage growth of individual talent, confidence, and pride in an environment where each person can develop skills and attitudes to become a responsible, understanding, and productive member of a changing society while promoting safety and providing security. **Overall**

### Roles and Responsibilities

Cato-Meridian CSD has employed two (2) Guards/SROs to serve as our safety experts, provide additional first responder resources, and oversee safety and security aspects on and, to a limited capability, off campus. Their responsibilities include:

- Lead school-wide emergency response planning culminating into an annual comprehensive District Safety Plan.
- Respond to immediate threats of harm to students or staff, and respond to low-level, non-violent criminal activity.
- Provide intervention, upon request by staff, when a student or students are acting unsafely or disruptive and refusing the staff member's request to stop the unsafe or disruptive activity.

- Provide guidance to administration with searches, investigations, and questioning of students.
- Be a consultant to the Superintendent and school administration regarding Penal Law and Criminal Procedure Law.

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- Interact with students and participate in school events to support the District's learning objectives.

Essential and Specific duties include:

- Immediately intervene in active student physical misconduct, especially if the potential of others being harmed exists.
- Conduct searches, investigations and questioning of students with oversight from the Superintendent.
- Upon request, provide recommendations and support to school administration and staff related to school discipline and code of conduct violations.
- Be available during the regular school day for staff requests.
- Recommend best practices available for security measures; including physical and virtual measures.
- Patrol district property for suspicious activity, unauthorized persons on campus, or unauthorized entry.
- Provide in-service training to help employees be better prepared to deal with security-related matters, and serve as a wrap-around team member to support student success.
- Work closely with the principal and staff of the school to foster a better understanding of the law enforcement function to maintain a secure learning environment. Proactively work with the school's leadership team and collaborate with the school's administrative team on safety protocols and procedures.
- Serve as a visible and active security officer on campus dealing with law-related areas such as drugs, traffic, trespassing, fighting, and thefts. Enforce campus rules and regulations.
- Conduct routine patrols of assigned facilities to include buildings, parking lots; Operate district equipment to include alarm systems and surveillance equipment.
- Take necessary action to protect against unwanted intruders. Identify and prevent (through counseling and referral) delinquent behavior, including substance abuse.

- Work collaboratively with public safety agencies to serve as a liaison between school and community to deter criminal and delinquent behavior.
- Conduct training and workshops for students, staff and parents to promote social awareness, relationship skills, self-management, self-awareness and responsible decision making.

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- Coordinate security for crowd control at large extra-curricular activities and special events.
- Assist and follow-up with local law enforcement agencies with criminal incidents/activity that may impact the safety of our students and staff. Serve as the initial first responder and school safety coordinator for campus emergencies.
- Respond to calls of crimes against person(s) or property in-progress. Report crimes that have already occurred.
- Subdue offenders and criminals by using the minimum amount of force needed to protect the Guard/SRO and other persons.
- Provide classroom presentations on crime prevention and fundamental concepts and structure of the law. Teach law-related education, de-escalation techniques, and conflict resolution to students and staff.
- Provide instructions and directions to others as it pertains to law enforcement matters and emergency situations.
- Conduct security building assessments for schools; guard, check and secure doors, rooms, buildings and equipment.
- Operate a two-way radio and qualify, annually, with a firearm.
- Monitor campus property for any violations of the code of conduct and report, as warranted.
- Act as the District's chief school safety officer.
- Perform other duties as assigned by appropriate supervisory personnel and school administrators.

### **Overall Roles and Responsibilities of the School District**

School administration shall handle all disciplinary matters. The Guard/SRO shall not be delegated this role. Each Principal is responsible for enforcing the District's code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly. Administration and staff can request

Guard/SRO support when a student or students are acting unsafely or disruptive and refusing the staff member's request to stop the unsafe or disruptive activity. The Guard/SRO will integrate within the Cato-Meridian school community. The Superintendent, or his representative, shall determine if/when mandatory Guard/SRO presence is warranted.

### **Requirements for Selection of SRO**

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The Board of Education is the approving authority for hiring the Guard/SRO. Per New York State Education Department, all job openings shall be posted to the public and an interview process shall be utilized for each applicant to determine best eligibility. Due to the nature of the job of Guard/SRO, special consideration shall be given to applicants who possess:

- Experience or knowledge in the law enforcement field
- Experience or knowledge in the education field; K-12 child development
- Knowledge of the Cato-Meridian community

### **Training**

Ideally, the Guard/SRO shall have numerous years of law enforcement experience. In understanding New York State Education Law, retired police officers from within a New York State police agency shall have preferential treatment. The position mandates that the Guard/SRO must be able to handle a loaded firearm. Professional development training includes annual weapons qualification, any NYSED requirements, and any future BOCES and/or District requirements, to include on-line training, and any future law enforcement-sponsored training. At least once a year and where feasible, joint training will be conducted with school staff and the Guard/SRO.

### **Privacy Protections and Information Sharing**

- Per the District's code of conduct

### **Due Process Protections and Notice to Parents**

- Per the District's code of conduct

### **Expectations and Oversight of the SRO Program**

The Guard/SRO works at the discretion of the Superintendent. To that end, the Guard/SRO shall be the Superintendent's subject matter expert with regards to safety and security. At least

annually, the Superintendent, along with the Board of Education, shall review the Guard/SRO's performance and determine 1) whether to retain services, and/or 2) whether to modify services.

### **Provision of Equipment and Materials for SRO**

The SRO is expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times. Cato-Meridian CSD shall provide the costs for outside training, seminars, or additional services required to maintain

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the position. Other costs, such as equipment and materials, shall be incurred per the employment agreement.

### **Police Department/School District Points of Contact**

- Local PD: N/A
- County: Cayuga County Sheriff's Office/Sheriff Brian Schenck (315) 253-1222 •
- State: New York State Police – Auburn's Sergeants (315) 255-2767

### **Data Collection and Reporting**

The Guard/SRO will document all incidents and information received relating to school district safety and security and will report the same to the administration and police when necessary. Page

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## **Annex B to District Safety Plan**

### **Communicable Disease Plan**

### **Cato-Meridian Central School District**

### **Mandated for April 1, 2021**

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This Annex to our Safety Plan has been developed in accordance with the amended New York State Labor Law section 27-c and New York State Education Law Paragraphs K and I of subdivision 2 of section 2801-a (as amended by section 1 of part B of chapter 56 of the laws of 2016), as applicable.

In accordance with New York Education Law § 2801-a(2)(m) and New York Labor Law § 27-c, Cato-Meridian Central School District (the "District") has prepared the Public Health Emergency

Communicable Disease Plan to guide the District employees and the community in preparation for and in response to a declared public health emergency involving a communicable disease.

No content of this Plan is intended to impede, infringe, diminish, or impair the rights of us or our valued employees under any law, rule, regulation, or collectively negotiated agreement, or the rights and benefits which accrue to employees through collective bargaining agreements, or otherwise diminish the integrity of the existing collective bargaining relationship.

A copy of the final version of this Plan will be published in a clear and conspicuous location and shall be included in The District Safety Plan.

The District publishes this Plan based on the requirements in place at the time of its publication but recognizes it must be flexible in the time of response to a communicable disease. Accordingly, the Plan may be updated over time. The District will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal orders, rules, laws, and regulations (the “Authority”). To the extent the Authority conflicts with any provisions of these Protocols, the District will comply with the Authority.

The Superintendent is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of this Plan and may designate one (1) or more employees to assist in such oversight. The Superintendent will consult legal counsel for guidance regarding any executive orders, rules, laws or regulations, as needed.

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## Planning Assumptions

The health and safety of our employees and contractors are crucial to maintaining our mission-essential operations. The fundamentals of reducing the spread of communicable diseases include, but are not limited to:

- Using hand sanitizer and washing hands with soap and water frequently, including:
  - After using the restroom
  - After returning from a public outing
  - After touching/disposing of garbage
  - After using public computers, touching public tables and countertops, etc.
- Practicing social distancing, when possible.
- If you are feeling ill or have a fever, notify your supervisor immediately. *(For the purposes of this annex, a fever is having a body temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater.)*
- If you start to experience coughing or sneezing, step away from people and food, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue, the latter of which should be disposed of immediately.
- Clean and disinfect workstations at the beginning, middle, and end of each shift.
- Other applicable guidance should also be considered, which may be published by the New York State Department of Health (“NYSDOH”), and/or local public health departments.

The following assumptions have been made in the development of this Plan:

- The health and safety of our students, employees and contractors, and their families, is of utmost importance.

- The circumstances of a public health emergency may directly impact our own operations. • Impacts of a public health emergency will take time for us to respond to, with appropriate safety measures put into place and adjustments made to operations to maximize safety. • The public and our constituency expect us to maintain a level of mission-essential operations. • Resource support from other jurisdictions may be limited based upon the level of impact the public health emergency has upon them.
- Supply chains, particularly those for personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies, may be heavily impacted, resulting in considerable delays in procurement. • The operations of other entities, including the private sector (vendors, contractors, etc.), non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies and services may also be impacted due to the public health emergency, causing delays or other disruptions in their services.
- Emergency measures and operational changes may need to be adjusted based upon the specific circumstances and impacts of the public health emergency, as well as guidance and direction from public health officials and the Governor.
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor who is required to be physically present at a worksite to perform their job.
- Per S8617B/A10832, 'non-essential employee' is defined as a public employee or contractor who is not required to be physically present at a worksite to perform their job.

## Concept of Operations

In executing this Plan, all employees and applicable contractors of the District shall be notified by emails and/or texts with additional information and updates provided on a regular basis, as information and updates become available. Superintendents and other designated administrators will be notified of pertinent operational changes by way of written notification via email and/or texts. Other interested parties, such as vendors, will be notified by phone and/or email as necessary. The Superintendent, or their designee, will maintain communications with the public and constituents as needed throughout the implementation of this plan.

The Superintendent of the District, or their designee, will maintain awareness of information, direction, and guidance from public health officials and the Governor's office, directing the implementation of changes, as necessary.

Upon the conclusion of the public health emergency, as determined by the applicable governmental agency, the Superintendent of the District, or their designee, will direct the resumption of normal operations or operations with modifications as necessary.

## Essential Positions

The table below identifies the positions or titles that are essential to be staffed on-site for the continued operation of each essential function. Note that while some functions and associated personnel may be essential, some of these may be conducted remotely, as determined by the Superintendent or their designee, and do not need to be identified in this section.

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<i>Administration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Superintendent</i></li> <li>● <i>Business Official</i></li> <li>● <i>Payroll Clerk</i></li> <li>● <i>Treasurer</i></li> <li>● <i>Principal</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Ensures central point of communication and leadership, the safety of facilities and continuity of District operations</i></li> <li>● <i>Ensures supervision and oversight of District operations and hardcopy business functions</i></li> <li>● <i>Management of facilities, instruction, instructional tools and access to same</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Food Service</i></li> <li><i>Transportation</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Food Service Manager</i></li> <li>● <i>Cooks</i></li> <li>● <i>Food Service Workers</i></li> <li>● <i>Director of Transportation</i></li> <li>● <i>Bus Drivers</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Preparation of meals and oversight of food service operations</i></li> <li>● <i>Coordination of necessary travel, meals and/or other needed services</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Custodial Services</i></li> <li><i>Instructional Services</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Director of Facilities</i></li> <li>● <i>Maintenance Workers</i></li> <li>● <i>Custodial Workers</i></li> <li>● <i>Teachers</i> ● <i>Materials in classrooms</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Cleaning of facilities as necessary</i></li> <li>● <i>Maintaining of facilities as necessary</i></li> <li>● <i>Student populations</i></li> </ul>
<i>Health Office Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Nurses</i> ● <i>Assist with testing, reporting, and contact tracing</i></li> </ul>

By assigning certain staff to work remotely and by staggering work shifts, we can decrease crowding and density at worksites and on public transportation.

## Remote Work Protocols

In executing this Plan, those employees identified by the Superintendent, or their designee, as non-essential will be notified and authorized to work remotely, as needed working remotely requires:

1. Identification by the Superintendent or their designee of the staff who will be authorized to work remotely;
2. Approval and assignment of remote work and related schedules;
3. Remote work logs to track work progress and troubleshoot issues that arise;
4. Equipping staff for remote work, which may include but is not limited to:
  - a. Internet-capable laptop;
  - b. Necessary peripherals;
  - c. Access to VPN and/or secure network drives;
  - d. Access to software and databases necessary to perform their duties;
  - e. A solution for telephone communications
    - Note that phone lines may need to be forwarded to off-site staff

*Refer to the Cato-Meridian CSD Reopening Plan - Fall 2020*

## Staggered Shifts

Implementing staggered shifts may be needed for personnel performing duties that are necessary to be performed on-site but perhaps less sensitive to being accomplished only within core business hours. As possible, management will determine whether opportunities for staff to work outside core business hours as a strategy of limiting exposure is possible. Regardless of changes in start and end times of shifts, the District will ensure that employees are provided with their typical or contracted minimum work hours per week. Staggering shifts requires:

1. Identification of positions for which work hours will be staggered;
2. Approval and assignment of changed work hours; and
3. Communication with applicable parties.

## Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce the spread of the communicable disease is important to supporting the health and safety of our employees and contractors. PPE that may be needed can include but is not limited to:

- Masks;

- Face shields;
- Gloves; and/or
- Disposable gowns and aprons.

Note that while cleaning supplies are not PPE, there may be a related need for cleaning supplies used to sanitize surfaces, as well as hand soap and hand sanitizer. Protocols for providing PPE include the following:

1. Identification of the need for PPE based upon job duties and work location
2. Procurement of PPE
  - a. At least two pieces of each required type of PPE shall be obtained for each essential employee and contractor during any given work shift for at least six months.
  - b. Examples of available PPE include face masks, gloves, and gowns, thermometers.
3. Storage of, access to, and monitoring of PPE stock
  - a. PPE shall be stored in a manner that will prevent degradation.
  - b. Employees and contractors have immediate access to PPE in the event of an emergency and will be available in classrooms and office spaces.
  - c. An eight-week supply of PPE will be maintained and the Director of Facilities will be responsible for maintaining an adequate amount of PPE and cleaning supplies.

## Staff Exposures, Cleaning, and Disinfection

### Staff Exposures

Staff exposures are organized under several categories based upon the type of exposure and presence of symptoms. Following NYSDOH guidelines, we have established the following protocols:

- A. If employees or contractors are exposed to a known case of communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency (and deemed as a “close contact” with someone who is confirmed infected and it is determined the “close contact” isolate/quarantine, as determined by the local public health department):
  1. Close contacts shall remain at home or in a comparable setting and practice social distancing for the lesser of 10 days or other current applicable NYSDOH/public health guidance for the communicable disease in question.
    - a. As determined by the Superintendent, or their designee, these employees will be permitted to work remotely during this period of time if they are not ill, if such duties are capable of being performed remotely.
  2. As authorized by law and applicable government agencies, essential employees may continue work following potential exposure, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them, other employees and contractors, and our

constituency/public.

- a. Additional precautions will include the requirement of the subject employee or contractor, as well as others working in their proximity, to wear appropriate PPE at all times to limit the potential of transmission.
- b. In-person interactions with the subject employee or contractor will be limited as much as possible.

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- c. Work areas in which the subject employee or contractor are present will be disinfected according to the current NYSDOH/public health protocol. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
- d. If at any time they exhibit symptoms, refer to item B below.
- e. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure these protocols are followed.

B. If an employee or contractor exhibits symptoms of the Disease that is the subject of the public health emergency, the Superintendent or their designee:

1. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms in the workplace should be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors. They should immediately be sent home with a recommendation to contact their physician.
2. Employees and contractors who exhibit symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home, with a recommendation to contact their physician.
3. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation per NYSDOH/local public health department guidance and/or have consulted with a healthcare provider, as applicable.
4. The District will not require sick employees to provide a negative test result for the disease in question or healthcare provider's note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work unless there is a recommendation from the NYSDOH/public health officials to do so.
5. Persons exhibiting symptoms may return to work if at least 24 hours have passed since the last instance of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications or in accordance with other NYSDOH/local public health department guidance.

C. If an employee or contractor has tested positive for the communicable disease that is the subject of the public health emergency:

1. Apply the steps identified in item B, above, as applicable.
2. Areas occupied by the subject employee or contractor will be closed off in accordance with applicable NYSDOH/local public health department guidance.
  - a. NYSDOH and other local public health department guidance will be considered before cleaning, disinfecting, and reoccupying of those spaces will take place. If this time period is not possible, a period of as long as possible will be given.
  - b. Any common areas entered, surfaces touched, or equipment used shall be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
  - c. See the section on Cleaning and Disinfection for additional information on that subject.
3. Identification of potential employee and contractor exposures will be conducted a. If an

employee or contractor is confirmed to have the communicable disease in question, the Superintendent or their designee will inform all contacts of their possible exposure.

Confidentiality shall be maintained as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- b. Apply the steps identified in item A, above, as applicable, for all potentially exposed individuals.

We recognize there may be nuances or complexities associated with potential exposures, close contacts, symptomatic persons, and those testing positive. We will follow the NYSDOH/local public health

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department recommendations and requirements and coordinate with our local public health department for additional guidance and support as needed.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

NYSDOH/local public health department guidelines will be followed for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces/areas. Present guidance for routine cleaning during a public health emergency includes:

1. The Director of Facilities will be responsible for identifying appropriate staff for cleaning/disinfecting of workspaces and frequency.
2. Employees and contractors will clean their own workspaces at the beginning, middle, and end of their shifts, at a minimum.
  - a. High traffic/high-touch areas and areas that are accessible to the public/constituents will be disinfected at least hourly.
  - b. The custodial staff shall be responsible for cleaning common areas daily.
3. Staff tasked with cleaning and disinfecting areas will be issued and required to wear PPE appropriate to the task.
4. Soiled surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before being disinfected. 5. Surfaces will be disinfected with products that meet EPA criteria for use against the virus in question and which are appropriate for that surface.
6. Staff will follow instructions for cleaning products to ensure safe and effective use of the products.

## Employee and Contractor Leave

Public health emergencies are extenuating and unanticipated circumstances in which the District is committed to reducing the burden on our employees and contractors. The District shall comply with applicable collective bargaining agreements as well as state and federal laws and regulations related to employee leave. This policy may be altered based upon changes in law or regulation, as applicable.

Additional provisions may be enacted based upon need and the guidance and requirements in place by federal and state employment laws, FMLA, executive orders, and other potential sources.

Contractors, either independent or affiliated with a contracted firm, are not classified as employees of the District, and as such are not provided with paid leave time by the District unless required by law.

## Documentation of Work Hours and Locations

In a public health emergency, it may be necessary to document the work hours and locations of each employee and contractor to support contact tracing efforts. Identification of locations shall include on-site work and off-site visits.

This information may be used by the District to support contact tracing within the organization and may be shared with local public health officials.

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### **Recovery:**

- Re-establishing the normal school curriculum is essential to the recovery process and should occur as soon as possible. We will work toward a smooth transition from the existing learning methods to our normal process. We will use all described communication methods and the superintendent or his designee will keep the school community aware of the transition process.
- We will work closely with the New York State Education Department to revise or amend the school calendar as deemed appropriate.
- We will evaluate all building operations for normal function and re-implement appropriate maintenance and cleaning procedures.
- Post-incident Response Team(s) will assess the emotional impact of the crisis on students and staff and make recommendations for appropriate intervention.
- The District-Wide School Safety Team will meet to debrief and determine lessons learned. Information from the Business Office, Human Resources, Health Resources, Facility Director, and Curriculum Supervisor will be vital to this effort. The District-Wide School Safety Plan will be revised and updated, as necessary.
- Curriculum activities that may address the crisis will be developed and implemented.

## **Contact Tracing and COVID-19 Related School Safety Guidance**

### **Information**

Current evidence indicates that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted through respiratory droplets or contact. Contact transmission occurs when the virus contaminated hands touch the mucosa of the mouth, nose or eyes. The virus can also be transferred from one surface to another by contaminated hands, which facilitates indirect contact transmission. Consequently, hand hygiene is extremely important to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and wash with soap and water as soon as possible.

Wearing of facial mask/ facial covering can help communities slow the spread of COVID-19 when worn consistently and correctly by a majority of people in public settings; particularly when face masks/ covers are properly used along with other preventive measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, cleaning and disinfecting. To properly wear a face mask/ face cover, wash and dry your hands before and after touching or adjusting the mask, touch only the bands or ties when putting on and taking off your mask, make sure the mask fits to cover your nose, mouth and chin. Page 28

### **Communication**

The Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES, will communicate directly with members of the Cayuga County Health Department regarding COVID-19 issues and protocols. The primary COVID-19 contacts at the Cayuga County Health Department are:

Kevin Zippel, PhD., RN Supervising Community Health

Nurse Nancy Purdy, BSN, RN Director of Community Health Services

The Cayuga County Health Department designates (315)-253-1560 for primary use which is answered at the office during typical working hours and after hours by a 24 hour 7 day a week answering service who will contact appropriate personnel as requested. The Cayuga County Health Department fax number is 315-253-1156.

The Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES will communicate with the Cayuga County Health Department for any COVID -19 related concerns and questions pertinent to the operations of their districts including but not limited to the public health and well-being of the District's students and employees.

The Cayuga County Health Department will communicate with the Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES regarding COVID-19 related information or concerns pertinent to the public health and well-being of the District's students, faculty and staff; including but not limited to quarantine and isolation of students and employees.

The Responsible Parties at any school district/BOCES will communicate with the Cayuga County Health

Department when learning from a staff member, student or parent that they have tested positive for COVID-19. In turn, the Cayuga County Health Department will verify the information is accurate before contact investigation is launched within the school district/BOCES

The Cayuga County Health Department and school shall provide each other with updates as to the progress of the investigation. The school Superintendent and designated Health Department team member will be the point of contact during the investigation process to provide consistency of information sharing and updates.

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## **Definitions**

Close Contact - defined as anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated.

Contact Tracing - interview a person having been diagnosed with a COVID-19 infection to determine whom they may have been contact with during the timeframe of being infectious in order to prevent spreading of the infection. Contact tracing is led by the Cayuga County Health Department. The school will be required to provide attendance records, contact information and other supportive information as requested to the health department.

Incubation Period - the interval between the time of invasion by an infectious agent and appearance of the first sign or symptom of the disease in question. For SARS-CoV-2 (COVID19), the incubation period is on average 4-5 days but may be as long as 14 days. 5% of persons will develop symptoms in 2 days; 50% of persons will develop symptoms in 5 days; 95 % will develop symptoms within 14 days.

Infectious Period - period of time during which a case is able to transmit a disease to others. The infectious period for COVID 19 starts 2 days before someone develops symptoms; is most infectious day of symptom onset; and infectiousness wanes over the course of 10 days.

Infectivity of COVID-19 - determined by its reproduction number, or R0 (pronounced R naught), which current epidemiological estimates suggest lies between 1.5 to 3. This means that every COVID-19 patient may infect up to three other people on average.

Isolation - the Health Department will require, through public health order, a person to go into mandatory isolation who has tested positive for COVID-19 and shall be monitored by the health department.

Proximate Contact - anyone within the same enclosed environment, such as a classroom, office or gathering, for 60 minutes or more with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. The total minutes across the infectious period will determine the need for quarantine

Precautionary Quarantine - A resident of New York State (NYS) returning from travel to a designated

state for designated period of time or an international traveler arriving to NYS are required to quarantine for 10 days. It is possible having traveled to these areas, the traveler is a proximate contact of a positive Covid-19 individual(s).

Self-Care - ability to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health-care provider.

Social Distancing - also called physical distancing; means keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet away from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Quarantine - the Health Department will require a person having proximate or close contact to a positive Covid-19 person to mandatory quarantine, through public health order, and will monitor person for development of symptoms. Separating people and limiting movement of people who have or may have been exposed can help to prevent spread of illness from people with COVID-19 before they feel ill or have symptoms.

## **Screening**

The Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES will monitor daily the employees, students and necessary visitors for symptoms of COVID-19, to include daily screening before entering the school buildings. Employees and students should be encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, scratchy or sore throat, a new loss of taste/smell, headache, and gastrointestinal symptoms. Refer to the New York State Department of Health COVID-19 Pre-K to Gr 12 COVID-19 Toolkit dated September 2020 for more symptom information.

Employees and students are not to attend school if feeling ill.

## **Testing**

COVID-19 testing is contingent upon availability of specimen collection material, appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and laboratory capacity. As such, the specific recommendations for specimen collection sites may be altered to reflect resources, timeliness of analysis and response. It is recommended all people seeking a COVID-19 test call in advance to schedule their appointment and assure health care personnel are appropriately attired. Additional opportunities for COVID-19 testing may become available over time. Contact your health care provider or urgent care center if you do not feel well and may need COVID-19 testing.

At the time this Plan is written, here are local resources for COVID-19 testing:

At all testing sites bring your health insurance card if you have one.

- Personal HealthCare provider

- Federally Qualifying Health Care Center:
  - o East Hill Family Medical Center in Auburn 315-253-8477
  - o Family Health Network in Moravia 315-497-9066
  - o Port Byron Community Health Care Center in Port Byron 315-531-9102
- Cayuga County Urgent Care Centers including:
  - FingerLakes Medical Urgent Care Center 303 Grant Ave. Auburn, NY 315-258-7100
  - Urgent Care of Auburn 37 West Garden St., Suite 105 Auburn, NY 315-252-0000
  - WellNow Urgent Care Center 271 Grant Ave. Auburn, NY 315-704-6097

- Out of county testing sites:

Upstate University Health System Syracuse 315-464-2582

Syracuse Community Health Center 819 South Salina St., Syracuse Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm and Saturdays 9am-1pm. No appointment necessary.

Cayuga Medical Associates Ithaca, NY: Appointment and Registration: [cayugahealth.org/](http://cayugahealth.org/). Or call 607-319-5708. Appointment is required and testing criteria must be met.

Call the NYS Department of Health hotline number for additional sites: 1-888-364-3065

## **Contact Tracing**

The Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES will immediately notify the Cayuga County Health Department (CHHD) upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by an individual in school facilities or on school grounds, including employees, students, and visitors. The CCHD will verify the person has tested positive.

The Cayuga County Health Department will lead the COVID-19 contact tracing effort partnering with the Responsible Parties at any school district/BOCES to provide names, addresses, phone numbers of pertinent people. Additionally, the Responsible Parties at any school district/BOCES will be required to provide attendance records, contact information and other supportive information as requested to the

health department.

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If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in school, the Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES may choose to temporarily move instruction to a remote format until all contacts can be identified, notified and placed in quarantine.

The CCHD will notify the Responsible Parties at any school district/ BOCES of any positive or quarantined employees or students.

#### **Scenarios/Flowcharts for Communicable Disease Decision Making**

Refer to the current guidance issued by New York State Department of Health.

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# **Annex C to District Safety Plan**

## **Workplace Violence Prevention Program**

### **Introduction:**

#### **What is Workplace Violence?**

Any physical assault or acts of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of their employment including but not limited to:

- An attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee;
- Any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- Intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury;
- Stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

#### **What is the New York State Workplace Violence Prevention Law and Regulation?**

On June 7, 2006, New York State enacted legislation creating a new Section 27-b of State Labor Law that requires every public employer to evaluate the risk of workplace assaults and homicides at its workplace(s) and to develop and implement programs to prevent and minimize the hazard of workplace violence to public employees. In 2009, NYS Department of Labor (DOL) implemented regulations to accompany the Workplace

Violence Prevention Law. These regulations can be found at 12 NYCRR 800.6 and are enforced by NYSDOL. Effective January 4, 2024, all public schools previously exempted under Section 2801 of the Education Law must comply with 12 NYCRR Part 800.6.

**Purpose of this program:**

The purpose of this Workplace Violence Prevention Program is to provide information to managers, supervisors, employees, and authorized employee representatives about preventing and responding to incidents of workplace violence or threats of violence in accordance with the Workplace Violence Prevention Law and Regulation.

The goal of this program is to reduce the probability of threats or acts of violence in the workplace and to ensure that any incident, complaint, or report of violence is taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and as expeditiously as possible. This program outlines the major components of our effort to meet these goals. At the core of this Workplace Violence Prevention Program is the Cato-Meridian Central School District's commitment to work with employees to maintain a work environment free from violence and other disruptive behavior to the greatest degree possible.

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**Policy Statement**

Cato-Meridian Central School District is committed to the safety and security of our employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to our agency, staff, clients, and students. Workplace Violence is defined as any physical assault or act of aggressive behavior occurring where a public employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment including but not limited to an attempt or threat, whether verbal or physical, to inflict physical injury upon an employee; any intentional display of force which would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm, intentional and wrongful physical contact with a person without his or her consent that entails some injury; or stalking an employee with the intent of causing fear of material harm to the physical safety and health of such employee when such stalking has arisen through and in the course of employment.

Acts of violence against the District/BOCES employees where any work-related duty is performed will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including

summoning criminal justice authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as clients, following all policies, procedures and practices, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of NYS Labor Law 27b and 12 NYCRR 800.6 and highlights some of the elements that are found within our Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The process involved in complying with this law included a workplace evaluation that was designed to identify the risks of workplace violence to which our employees could be exposed.

Authorized Employee Representative(s) will, at a minimum, be involved in:

- evaluating the physical environment;
- developing the Workplace Violence Prevention Program and;
- reviewing workplace violence incident reports at least annually to identify trends in the types of incidents reported, if any, and reviewing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions taken.

All employees will participate in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program. The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in our workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification. All personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

### Designated Workplace Violence Administrator/Officer Contact:

Name: Elizabeth Kupiac

Title: Assistant Superintendent

Department: N/A

Phone: (315) 626-3439 Ext. 5006

Location: District Office

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## **Workplace Risk Assessment**

Cato-Meridian Central School District has conducted a workplace risk assessment consisting of:

- Examination of records that concern workplace violence incidents, • Assessment of policies, practices, and procedures that may impact the risk of workplace violence, and
- Evaluation of the physical work environment for the presence of factors which may place employees at risk of workplace violence, with the participation of the authorized employee representatives. Although workplace violence can occur in any work setting, some settings or factors may pose a greater degree of risk. Employment situations or factors that may pose a higher risk for the employees include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Working in public settings
  - Working late night or early morning hours
  - Exchanging money with the public
  - Working alone or in small numbers
  - Working in a setting with uncontrolled access to the workplace
  - Working in a setting where previous security problems have occurred

- Having a mobile workplace assignment
  - Having duties that include the delivery of passengers, goods, or services

Any incidents that may occur after the implementation of this program must be carefully documented and analyzed in order to make improvements to this program during the required annual review or as necessary.

## **Control methods that the Cato-Meridian Central School District will use to prevent workplace violence incidents**

### **Hierarchy of Controls**

There are three main types of control measures that may be implemented as part of a safety program to protect employees from recognized hazards. The following types of controls are arranged in order of preference and effectiveness - this is referred to as the "hierarchy of control measures".

#### **Hierarchy of Controls**

- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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**Engineering controls** eliminate or reduce the hazard through substitution or design (possible capital project). An example of an engineering control would be the installation of a physical barrier to protect employees from a member of the public (windows, deep counters). Engineering controls are not always feasible. If engineering controls are not feasible, the employer must then consider administrative controls.

**Administrative controls** eliminate or reduce the hazard through organizational policies, procedures and work practices (staff promulgated action). (Refer to District-Wide School Safety Plan, Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment Policy, Employee Handbook, etc.).

#### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE is generally considered the least desirable form of control, but may be needed to enhance other controls and/or minimize potential injury severity when other controls fail. Reference to special education and student IEPs to determine and develop what types of materials are necessary to protect staff.

### **Prevention**

Prevention of violence in the workplace is the responsibility of every employee. The following section focuses on early warning signs and workplace issues that have the potential to trigger violent behavior. Management, employees, and authorized employee representatives should be familiar with the issues below in order to become aware of and to reduce the likelihood of workplace violence.

## **Reporting an incident**

At the core of this Workplace Violence Prevention Program is the Cato-Meridian Central School District's commitment to work with its employees to maintain a work environment free from violence and other disruptive behavior to the greatest degree possible.

Any employee, upon becoming aware of an instance of physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting must immediately report the facts and circumstances of said incident to their supervisor and/or to the contact person identified in the Policy Statement using the Workplace Violence Incident Report (see Appendix 1). In the event that employees observe or experience an incident of violence involving an employee or visitor to the District in which there is an immediate threat to their safety or the safety of others or where an injury has occurred, the employee will immediately obtain law enforcement and medical assistance by calling 911 and in addition notify their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will immediately conduct a

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preliminary inquiry into the facts and circumstances of the incident and make a prompt report to the Workplace Violence Administrator/Officer.

Where a developing pattern of workplace violence incidents which may involve criminal conduct or serious injury exist, the Cato-Meridian Central School District will attempt to develop a protocol with the appropriate local District Attorney or Police agency to ensure that violent crimes committed against employees in the workplace are promptly investigated and appropriately prosecuted.

Retaliation against an employee who makes a good faith report of violence or other disruptive behavior is strictly prohibited and shall be subject to appropriate corrective or disciplinary measures. An employee who, in bad faith makes a false report, is also subject to disciplinary action.

## **Employee Information and Training**

Training of every employee will be performed upon initial assignment and annually thereafter. Retraining is required any time there is a significant change to the program, a risk factor, or work control (see Appendix 2).

### **Recordkeeping Requirements**

The record keeping requirements outlined in 12 NYCRR Part 801, Recording and reporting Public Employees' Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, must be used to document recordable injuries sustained during workplace violence incidents.

In addition to Part 801, all incidents will be investigated and documented to ensure that all threats and workplace violence incidents are reported to management. These reports will provide written notification when a violence incident occurs so that management can develop an appropriate response. The Incident Report will also create a historical record that can be used in the annual review and program update.

### **Program Review**

The Designated Workplace Violence Administrator/Officer, with the Authorized Employee Representatives, and/or Designated Staff shall evaluate the effectiveness of this Workplace Violence Prevention Program, at least annually or after any serious incident. The review will focus on incident trends, addressing root cause, and the effectiveness of the control measures in place or the need to make changes. The review

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will also assess whether the reporting and record keeping systems have been effective in collecting all relevant information.

Following the submission of a written notice of concern regarding the employer's workplace violence program or that an imminent danger exists, the employer must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to address the reported concern. If the employee or authorized employee representative believes that the reported concern has not been resolved and a serious violation of the school district workplace violence prevention program still exists, the employee or authorized employee representative may request an inspection by notifying the Commissioner of Labor.

For additional information on recordkeeping or workplace violence prevention, or to request free and confidential consultation assistance, please use the contact information on the Consultation Fact Sheet available here:

<https://dol.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/10/p206-pesh-consultation-fact-sheet.pdf>

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# Cato-Meridian Central School District

## Workplace Violence Incident Report

**Date of Incident:**

**Workplace location where incident occurred:**

**Time of day/shift when incident occurred:**

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Names and job titles of involved employees:

Detailed description of the incident, including events leading up to the incident and how the incident ended:

Name or other identifier (*if student is involved keep confidential*) and job titles of involved individuals:

Nature and extent of injuries arising from the incident:

Names of witnesses:

*Note: If the case is a "privacy concern case," remove the name of the employee who was the victim of the workplace violence and enter "PRIVACY CONCERN CASE" in the space normally used for the employee's name. Privacy concern cases include cases involving:*

- *Mental illness;*
- *HIV infection;*
- *Needle stick injuries and cuts from sharp objects that are or may be contaminated with another person's blood or other potentially infectious material; and*

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- *Other injuries or illnesses, if the employee independently and voluntarily requests that his or her name not be entered on the report.*

## **APPENDIX 2**

# Cato-Meridian Central School District Program Maintenance and Review

Program review (annual) completed on: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Stakeholders and authorized employee representatives (where applicable)


## Workplace Violence Administrator/Officer contact information

The most current version of this plan will be made available to employees, their authorized representatives, and to representatives of the NYS Department of Labor by contacting or visiting the District's website (<https://www.catomeridian.org>)

Name: Elizabeth Kupiac

Title: Assistant Superintendent

Department: N/A

Phone: (315) 626-3439 Ext. 5006

Location: District Office