

Irma Zardoya, Board Chairperson  
Derick T. Spaulding, CEO



AECI Charter Schools Network  
838 Brook Ave, Bronx, NY 10451  
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## **AECI Charters Network - District-Wide School Safety Plan (2024-2025)**

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

The AECI Charter Schools Network is committed to ensuring that our schools are safe, secure, and nurturing environments in which students can meet high academic standards, educators can teach toward those goals, and parents can be assured that their children are learning in a safe and positive school setting. A safe and supportive school depends upon the efforts of all members of the school community to treat one another with mutual respect. State Law requires that the AECI Network develop a District-wide Safety Plan that addresses emergency management and crisis intervention, and a Code of Conduct that governs the conduct of students. In addition, each school is required to develop a building level safety plan, which establishes building safety procedures including visitor control, student evacuation and other school-specific emergency procedures.

### **District-Wide School Safety Plan Review & Public Comment:**

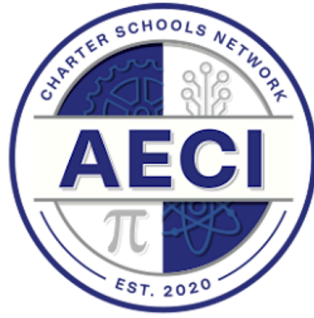
The District-Wide Safety Plan will be posted for public comment on June 3, 2024 and will be adopted after a public hearing to be held on July 8, 2024. This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the Network Safety (Emergency Response) Team. After approval, the required annual review will be completed on or before August 1st and adopted by the Board of Trustees by August 8, 2024. The District-wide Safety Plan reflects the input and recommendations of the Network-wide Safety Team, the composition of which is described in the plan.

We will include representatives of all key school constituents and interested parties in the development and review of this plan. The final plan will be formally adopted by the Board. This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the School Safety (Emergency Response) Team. After approval, the required annual review will be completed on or before August 1st of each year after its adoption.

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

As a Network of charter schools, the Aeci Network District-wide Safety Plan has been developed by representatives of all school Safety Teams, following District-wide Safety Plan guidelines distributed by NYSED, and in consultation with the NYC Charter School Office and Department of Education Charter school office. In the event of an emergency or violent incident, the initial response to all emergencies at the School will be by the School Emergency Response

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Team. As necessary, the AECI Network Charter School Board of Trustees and/or local emergency officials will also be notified. Existing county and state resources will be called upon for assistance as possible/required through existing protocols.

The District-Wide Safety Plan incorporates the Network policies and procedures for maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment. The Plan includes policies and procedures for:

- Responding to acts of violence or other criminal activities
- Contacting and notifying parents
- Contacting and notifying law enforcement officials

Additionally, the Plan addresses:

- Strategies for detecting potentially violent behavior
- Intervention and prevention strategies
- Strategies to improve communications among students and between students and school staff
- the role and responsibilities of each schools safety personnel
- Training of school safety personnel
- School building security and security devices
- Emergency response protocols
- Safety training for staff and students, including training on the emergency response protocols; and drills and other exercises to test these protocols and other components of the Safety Plan

The Network employs a Chief Executive Officer, to be responsible for coordinating:

- Communication between staff and law enforcement and other first responders
- Annual review and update of the District-wide Safety Plan
- Completion of school safety plans, including emergency response plans that are aligned and consistent with the District-wide Safety Plan
- Building level security and technology
- Safety, security and emergency training for staff and students
- Emergency response drills

District-wide Safety Team includes representatives from:

- AECI 1 (Mr. Healy - Principal, Mrs. Dooley- AP, Mr. Santos - Head Security)
- AECI 2 (Mr. Taveras- Principal, Mr. Mastrocola- Assistant Principal, Mr. Vidal - Dean / Lead Security)

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- Irma Zardoya - Board of Trustees (Board President)
- Consulting Members of State / City Agencies (Fire & Police Department)

### **General Response Protocols (GRP):**

The following are the emergency response protocols that all Network schools must follow for conducting lockdowns, evacuations and shelter in place. Each protocol has specific staff and student actions that are unique to each response. These are the actions schools take until first responders arrive. For all three protocols, 911 must be called. If the principal/designee did not initiate the call, they must be advised immediately that the call was placed, in accordance with The District Safety plan sets forth the policies and procedures regarding contacting the New York City Police Department (NYPD) . GRP prepares schools for emergency situations such as fire, intruders inside the school, active shooters within the school or dangerous conditions outside the school building. These protocols outline the immediate response school staff and students will take until first responders arrive.

Lockdown (Soft/Hard) Soft Lockdown implies that there is no identified imminent danger to the sweep teams. Hard Lockdown implies that imminent danger is known and NO ONE will engage in any building sweep activity. The following will be announced: “Attention: We are now in a Soft/Hard Lockdown. Take proper action.” (Repeated twice over the PA system.) All individuals will take appropriate lockdown action and await the arrival of first responders.

Students are trained to:

- Move out of sight and maintain silence.

Teachers are trained to:

- Check the hallway outside of their classrooms for students, lock classroom doors, and turn the lights off
- Move away from sight and maintain silence
- Wait for first responders to open door, or until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Lockdown has been lifted,” followed by specific directions
- Take attendance and account for missing students by contacting the main office.

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## **Evacuation**

The fire alarm system is the initial alert for staff and students to initiate an evacuation. However, there may be times when the PA system and specific directions will serve as the alert initiating an evacuation. Announcements will begin with “Attention,” followed by specific directions. (Repeated twice over the PA system.)

Students are trained to:

- Leave belongings behind and form a single file line. In cold weather, students should be reminded to take their coats when leaving the classroom. Students in physical education attire WILL NOT return to the locker room. Students without proper outdoor attire will be secured in a warm location as immediately as possible.

Teachers are trained to:

- Grab evacuation folder (with attendance sheet and Assembly Cards)
- Lead students to evacuation location as identified on Fire Drill Posters
- ALWAYS LISTEN FOR ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS.
- Take attendance and account for students
- Report injuries, problems, or missing students to school staff and first responders using Assembly Cards. September 2021 Shelter-In The following will be announced: “Attention: This is a Shelter-In. Secure all exit doors.” (Repeated twice over the PA system.)

Students are trained to:

- Remain inside of the building
- Conduct business as usual
- Respond to specific staff directions.

Teachers are trained to:

- Increase situational awareness
- Conduct business as usual. The Shelter-In directive will remain in effect until hearing the “All Clear” message: “The Shelter-In has been lifted,” followed by specific directions. Building Response Team members, floor wardens, and Shelter-In staff will secure all exits and report to specific post assignments. These staff and their specific responsibilities are outlined in each Building Safety Plan.

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## **Hold**

Hold is initiated when there is a condition inside the school building, and the immediate need to address the condition requires staff, students, and visitors to remain in place and conduct business as usual until the “All Clear” is announced. Hold might be initiated to manage an incident in the building that does not place the school community in danger, or whenever directed by First Responders. Hold does not replace a soft or hard lockdown.

Upon hearing the Hold announcement:

Staff must:

- Lock the door
- Hold in their current location
- Contact the main office to report any students who were out of the class when the Hold was announced

Students/staff must:

- Remain where they are until the “All Clear” announcement is made
- Ignore any bells that usually signal the end of the class
- Remember that there is no use of the classroom pass and everyone must remain in place until the Hold is lifted

## **Response to Threats and Criminal Acts:**

School officials must be prepared to respond to threats or acts of criminal behavior, by students, school personnel and visitors, from physical assault to bomb threats. The procedures for notifying law enforcement officials of school-related incidents, crimes committed by students or school employees, or medical emergencies are contained in the AECI Network Code of Conduct and other policies (see Key Documents below). As outlined above, the General Response Protocols (GRP) will be used to respond to all threats and acts of violence, along with an immediate response by district staff and 911 first responders. Upon arrival, all district and emergency response efforts will be coordinated with school officials and SSA to provide incident specific support.

School officials must also be prepared to respond to threats by students against themselves. The procedures for establishing a school Crisis Team and for handling suicide attempts, suicidal behavior and suicidal ideation are contained in AECI Network Code of Conduct and policies (see Key Documents below).

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When a student engages in behavior that poses a substantial risk of injury to the student or others, school officials must make every effort to safely de-escalate the behavior by using strategies and interventions for addressing behavioral crises and utilizing the in-school and community resources identified in the school's Crisis De-escalation Plan. Additionally, the parent must be given an opportunity to speak with the student if safety considerations permit. If the situation cannot be safely addressed, the principal/designee must call 911.

### **Procedures for Bomb Threats**

A person receiving a bomb threat by telephone or other means or who finds a suspicious device on school property shall inform the Principal/Assistant Principal immediately. Upon learning of the bomb threat, the Principal/Assistant Principal shall alert local law enforcement, utility companies and the Board Members.

Upon learning of the bomb threat, the Principal/Assistant Principal, in consultation with law enforcement shall:

- Evaluate the credibility of the threat
- Decide whether to direct a search of the building; and
- If so, decide whether the search should be conducted while the building is occupied or after it has been evacuated. In so doing, the Principal shall resolve all doubts in favor of finding the threat credible, a search necessary and prior evacuation necessary.

After deciding which course of action to follow, the Principal/Assistant Principal shall activate the school safety response team.

### **Evacuation**

The Principal/ Assistant Principal, in consultation with the school safety response team, shall decide on the extent to which the building will be evacuated. The decision shall be either:

- To assemble all building occupants in one location, such as the gymnasium;
- To evacuate just a portion of the building;
- To evacuate the entire building to a particular site or sites no less than 300' from the building; or
- To dismiss students and/or staff for the balance of the day

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Principal/Assistant Principal will inform staff immediately of the decision to evacuate. Staff are not to touch any object found to be suspicious and report it to the Principal/Assistant Principal/School Safety Team who will report it to law enforcement.

- The Principal/Assistant Principal shall direct appropriate personnel to turn off gas and other fuel lines at intake
- The Principal/ Assistant Principal shall decide whether electric power to the building should be turned off
- The Principal/Assistant Principal, in consultation with the School Safety Team, shall decide on the extent to which the building will be searched

### **After a Bomb Threat**

1. Investigation - The Principal/Assistant Principal, and all other school personnel, shall cooperate with law enforcement personnel involved in investigating a bomb threat
2. Discipline - Any student involved in the making of a bomb threat, in addition to any penalty imposed by law, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school, up to and including expulsion subject to the school's student discipline policy
3. Civil liability - AECI Charter Schools Network reserves the right to bring suit against anyone responsible for a bomb threat and to seek restitution and other damages permitted by law
4. Lost time - Any school time lost as a result of a bomb threat shall be made up on days and at times determined by the Schools, CEO and Board of Trustees
5. Counseling - The Principal/ Assistant Principal, in consultation with appropriate guidance shall assess the effect of the bomb threat on all staff and students and refer appropriately for any counseling
6. Evaluation - Within one week following the conclusion of the school's response to a bomb threat, the Principal shall convene the bomb threat response team to evaluate the school's response and need for any changes.

### **Response to Acts of Violence**

In the event of actual violence by any member of the school community or person on school grounds, the school will follow the procedure below:

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- Injured parties will be provided with medical attention as necessary
- Offending individuals will be contained by building security until local law enforcement arrives
- Principal/Assistant Principal and School Safety Team will determine the level of threat
  - The immediate area will be isolated or evacuated
  - Activate lockdown procedures
  - Local law enforcement notified

For all Situations:

- Parents – The principal/Assistant Principal will determine with consultation with the leadership/safety teams if and when parents need to be informed
- Media – The principal/ Assistant Principal will determine with consultation with the Board if and when the media needs to be informed.
- The school safety team will convene within 48 hours to conduct a situation debrief/postmortem
- Feedback from staff, students, security, etc... will result in future plan updates as necessary

### **Protective Action Options (Situation Plan)**

#### **School Cancellation:**

- Monitor situation that may warrant school cancellation (Principal/Assistant Principal)
- Make cancellation determination
- Inform families/students, staff, and Board

#### **Early Dismissal:**

- Monitor situation
- Principal/Assistant Principal make early dismissal determination and time
- Contact school transportation providers
- Inform families/students and staff
- Retain any personnel on site until all students dismissed



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### **Evacuation (before during, and after school hours)**

- Determine level of threat
- Contact transportation providers
- Evacuate staff and students
- Report any missing persons to Principal
- Contact families/students

### **Disaster Mental Health Services**

Disaster Mental Health Resources will be coordinated directly by each AECI Network School. After the recovery stage of any incident, the school safety team will conduct an internal post mortem that will include re-evaluations of violence prevention and school safety activities as appropriate to improve our plan. Updates to the safety plan will be made as appropriate. Members of the social-emotional team are available as needed for the school community for any counseling services.

### **Training & Drills:**

All principals are required to complete mandatory Emergency Readiness training, which is valid for two years. Training is offered during July and August. All Network staff must receive annual training on the GRP, as well as the early detection of potentially violent behavior. All students must receive training on emergency response protocols and available school resources at the start of each school year. Lessons reviewing the GRP must be conducted with all students at the beginning of each school year. GRP, must be shared with families at the start of each school year as well. An introductory letter and a summary of emergency procedures are provided to schools to be distributed to families. All schools are required to conduct the following drills that test the components of their emergency response plan. These drills must include all the limited mobility students and staff who must be moved to FDNY-approved holding rooms, fire rescue areas, or areas of rescue assistance.

Principals must hold a minimum of 12 emergency drills each school year, eight of which must be held by December 31. The eight drills must include evacuation and lockdown drills. At least four of the 12 drills must be lockdown drills, one of which must be conducted by October 31, and another must be conducted between February 1 - March 14. The final two can be conducted at the school's discretion. Drills shall be conducted under varying circumstances at varying hours, including lunch periods and at unannounced times to simulate actual emergency conditions.

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### **Parent Notification:**

The threat to commit or the actual commission of an act of violence at a school affects an entire school community. In the event of threats or acts of violence, school officials must be prepared to contact the appropriate law enforcement agencies and to notify, without delay, the school community, especially the parents of children enrolled at the school. The school leaders may employ the use of school specific notification systems to alert parents and the school community of specific emergencies occurring at the school. Schools should consult with their CEO, field counsel and BOT in crafting these notifications.

### **Building-level School Safety Plan:**

Every Network school must establish a School Safety Committee for developing a building-level school safety plan. Each committee must include the following individuals:

- Custodial Engineer/designee
- In-house Security Agent
- local law enforcement officials
- Parent Association President/designee
- Dietician/designee of food services for the site
- community members
- local fire officials
- local ambulance or other emergency response agencies
- representative of the student body (when appropriate)
- any other persons deemed appropriate by the principal(s).

As set forth in each school safety plan, every school is required to establish a Chain of Command and multiple teams, including, a Building Response Team and a Crisis Team, and to designate administrative staff, who coordinate the school's response in emergency situations.

The plan also describes, among other things, the school's building entry and visitor control procedures; security assignments and schedules; intruder procedures; emergency communications systems, including the names and telephone numbers of appropriate law enforcement personnel; missing student protocol; procedures for responding to door alarms; and evacuation procedures for all students, including those with limited mobility. Each plan describes the Building Response Team's roles and training to address all emergency response protocols for students and staff. Each building level plan establishes the protocols for responding to emergency situations, such as hazmat spills, intruders, bomb threats, hostage-taking or shooting, including whether to evacuate,shelter-in, or lockdown. Building level safety information that can

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be shared with staff and families is available, upon request, from each principal in the staff or parent version of the school safety plan.

### **Dangerous Behavior Interventions**

AECI Network Discipline Code incorporates the policies and procedures governing student conduct which establishes expected standards of behavior and a range of interventions, supports and disciplinary responses for engaging in misconduct; provisions for addressing and responding to discrimination, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying; policies and procedures for effectuating removals and suspensions; policies and procedures for notification of parents; requirements for reporting; requirements for notification of law enforcement; requirements for training of staff; and the Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities, which focuses on positive behavior and building a safe and supportive school climate.

A child under the age of 18 who does not attend school, behaves in a way that is dangerous or out of control, or often disobeys parents, guardians or other authorities, may be found to be a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS). Parents are required to receive diversion services through the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Family Assessment Program (F.A.P.), before they file for a PINS Petition. The F.A.P. The website includes information about PINS. (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/justice/family-assessment-program.page>). Parents can voluntarily go into any ACS Field Office and request preventive services. When truancy and/or school misbehavior is alleged in a PINS petition, ACS will review the steps taken by the school to improve the youth's attendance/school behavior and attempt to engage the school in further diversion efforts. ACS will contact the school to resolve the truancy or school behavioral problems in order to obviate the need to file a petition, or, at minimum, remediate the education-related allegations in the proposed petitions. DOE staff members could also be asked to provide documentation on interventions and the reasons why the educational issues cannot be resolved absent the filing of a PINS petition. The Family Court Judge could request that school staff appear in court when a PINS petition is filed and the court believes that the assistance of school staff may help to resolve education related matters. September 2023 1. Discipline Code:

The Network Code of Conduct establishes a framework for responding to student misconduct. It provides that every reasonable effort must be made to correct student behavior through counseling and other school-based interventions such as restorative practices. It further provides that appropriate disciplinary responses should emphasize prevention and effective intervention, foster resiliency, prevent disruption to students' education and promote a positive school culture. It includes a range of progressive age-appropriate interventions and supports, and disciplinary responses that can be used to respond to student misconduct.

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**Intervention Strategies:** Each network school is expected to promote a positive school culture and climate that provides students with a supportive environment in which to grow both socially and academically. Schools are expected to take a proactive role in nurturing students' prosocial behavior by providing them with a range of positive behavioral supports as well as meaningful opportunities for social-emotional learning. School staff members are responsible for addressing inappropriate student behaviors that disrupt learning. Administrators, teachers, counselors and other school staff are expected to engage all students in intervention and prevention strategies that address a student's behavioral issues and discuss these strategies with the student and parent(s). Intervention strategies are outlined in the Network Code of Conduct.

Intervention and prevention approaches may include guidance conference(s); parent outreach; conflict resolution; short-term behavioral progress reports; development of individual behavior contracts; intervention by counseling staff; referral to pupil personnel team; restorative practices; collaborative problem solving; individual/group counseling; individualized support plan; referral to counseling services; mentoring; social-emotional learning; and referral to a community based organization. Through the use of intervention and prevention strategies that engage students and give them a sense of purpose, school staff members facilitate students' academic and social-emotional growth and assist them in following school rules and policies.

In the classroom, teachers use a variety of academic and behavioral techniques and approaches to achieve an optimal learning environment. Interdisciplinary teams that include support staff such as guidance counselors are part of every school. These teams meet on a regular basis to devise and implement strategies to address specific issues encountered by "at-risk" students. Where appropriate, progressive age-appropriate disciplinary responses must be effectuated in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Discipline Code.

### **Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying:**

It is the policy of the AECI Network and its schools to maintain a safe and supportive learning and educational environment that is free from harassment, intimidation and/or bullying committed by students against other students and discrimination by students against other students on account of actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability or weight. The Code of Conduct establishes procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to such behavior. All students and staff must be provided with training on the Code of Conduct

**Parent Engagement and Notification:** Students, parents, and school personnel all have a role in making schools safe and must cooperate with one another to achieve this goal. School staff

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should keep parents informed of their child's behavior and enlist parents as partners in addressing areas of concern. To ensure that parents are able to become active and involved partners in promoting a safe and supportive school environment, they should become familiar with the Discipline Code. Schools are encouraged to provide workshops for parents on understanding the Discipline Code and how best to work with the school to support their child's social-emotional growth. Each school develops and makes available workshop training decks designed to assist administrators and parent coordinators in presenting information on the Discipline Code to parents. Educators are responsible for informing parents about their child's behavior and for nurturing the skills students need to succeed in school and in society. Parents are encouraged to discuss with their child's teacher and other school staff issues that may affect student behavior and strategies that might be effective in working with the student. Parents who want to discuss support and interventions in response to student behavior should contact their child's school, including the parent coordinator, or, if necessary, the Office of Family and Community Empowerment. In the event that a student engages in inappropriate behavior that violates the Discipline Code, the principal or principal's designee must report the behavior to the student's parent.

### **Training:**

Ensuring that every child learns in safe, supportive, and inclusive schools is the Network's top priority. To do this, our Network schools use restorative approaches that address the real causes of conflicts as well as reinforcing positive behaviors through teachable moments. The Network gives teachers the resources to support students' social emotional skills and well-being, and, as a result, reduces reliance on suspensions or punitive discipline. The manner in which students conduct themselves in school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining a safe and respectful school community. To promote positive student behavior, all members of the school community - students, staff, and parents - must know and understand the standards of behavior which all students are expected to live up to, the supports and interventions that will be used to address misconduct, and the disciplinary responses if behavioral standards are not met. Schools must set aside time to review the Code of Conduct which includes a Student Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy with students.

The most effective way to ensure that students understand and support the Code of Conduct is through age appropriate classroom instruction. All students must be given at least one lesson on the Code of Conduct. Our Network schools make available standards-based age appropriate lesson plans that include interactive exercises, suggested projects and opportunities for collaborative learning experiences among students.

All relevant and associate policy documents may be found on the AECI network website along with each school's independent website.

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AECI 2 - <https://aeci2charterhs.org/>