

TITLE: SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

POLICY:

The School Board for Lake Wales Charter Schools has as its first obligation to provide a safe, secure, and orderly learning environment in all schools and at all sponsored activities for students, school personnel, and other persons.

The board further believes that school administrators and local law enforcement officials must work together to provide for the safety and welfare of students while they are at school, at a school-related event, or on their way to and from school. The Board also believes that the first step in addressing school crime and violence is to assess the extent and nature of the problem(s), and then plan and implement strategies that promote school safety and minimize the likelihood of school crime and violence.

The Superintendent, in conjunction with the School Safety Specialist, shall develop a *Critical Incident Response Plan* with input from representatives of the local law enforcement agencies; the local Fire Marshall(s) or his/her designee(s); representative(s) from emergency medical services; building administrators; representative(s) from the local emergency management agency; School Resource Officer(s); School Safety Guardians; Safe Schools Department; and/or Specialized Services Department.

Included within the LWCS Critical Incident Response Plan shall be a District Active Assailant Response Plan. The Critical Response Plan shall include, at a minimum, procedures addressing the following:

- A. security assessments;
- B. roles and responsibilities of LWCS personnel;
- C. roles and responsibilities of Safe-School Officers/Guardians
- D. information sharing and compliance with Legislation updates and implementation;
- E. training of LWCS personnel and exercises/drills, including training standards;
- F. identification of Safe Spaces and Command Posts;
- G. response to the threat of an active assailant, including the following three (3) strategies: evading or evacuating, taking cover or hiding, and responding to or fighting back;

- H. response to the presence of an active assailant on school grounds;
- I. communication with law enforcement prior to and after law enforcement arrives on school grounds;
- J. responsibilities prior to law enforcement arrival;
- K. responsibilities when law enforcement arrives on school grounds;
- L. communication with the public; and
- M. post-incident recovery.

The LWCS will adopt its Critical Response Plan annually by October 1.

Further, by October 1st of each year, the Superintendent shall certify to the Office of Safe Schools and document in the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool that all school personnel have received annual training on the procedures contained in the LWCS Critical Response Plan.

School Safety Specialist

The Superintendent is responsible for designating the system's School Safety Specialist. The School Safety Specialist must be an administrator employed by the LWCS or must have law enforcement experience.

By August 1 of each year, the LWCS will submit the School Safety Specialist's name, phone number, and email address to PCSB who will notify the Office of Safe Schools at SafeSchools@fldoe.org. The PCSB will notify the Office of Safe Schools within one (1) school day whenever there is a change related to the contact information for the School Safety Specialist.

By September 1st and February 1st, LWCS must report all school guardians employed to SafeSchools@fldoe.org. Failure to send the updates will result in the inability to employ guardians in lieu of police officers.

A. Training

Within thirty (30) calendar days of appointment, the LWCS School Safety Specialist must complete and thereafter maintain certificates of completion of the following online Federal Emergency Management Agency Independent Study courses: Multi-Hazard Planning for Childcare; Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100; Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship; Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools; and Planning for the Needs of Children in Disasters.

Within one (1) year of appointment, and annually thereafter, the LWCS School Safety Specialist must earn a certificate of completion of school safety specialist training provided by the Office of Safe Schools.

The LWCS School Safety Specialist shall earn, or designate one (1) or more individuals to earn, certification as a youth mental health awareness and assistance trainer as set forth in F.S. 1012.584.

B. Responsibilities

The School Safety Specialist is responsible for the supervision and oversight of all school safety and security personnel, policies, and procedures in the system. The School Safety Specialist's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. reviewing at least annually LWCS policies and procedures for compliance with Florida law and applicable rules, as provided by F.S. 1006.07 (6)(a)1., including the LWCS timely and accurate submission of school environmental safety incident reports to the Department pursuant to F.S. 1001.212;
2. providing necessary training and resources to students and staff in matters relating to youth mental health awareness and assistance; emergency procedures, including active shooter training; and school safety and security;
3. serving as the LWCS liaison with local public safety agencies and national, State, and community agencies and organizations in matters of school safety and security;
4. conduct annually on or before October 1, in collaboration with the appropriate public safety agencies, a school security risk assessment at each LWCS school using the Florida Safe School Assessment Tool developed by the Office of Safe Schools;

The system will report to the PCSB annually who will then report to the FLDOE by October 15th of each year that all schools within the System have completed the assessment using the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool. For purposes of this section, "public safety agencies" means a functional division of a public agency that provides firefighting, law enforcement, medical, or other emergency services.

The LWCS will ensure the accuracy of current school listings within the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool application, including school name, address, and MSID number. The system will report to the Office of Safe

Schools via e-mail within five (5) school days of a school opening or closing, or when any other change occurs that impacts the accuracy of the system-provided information in the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool.

5. coordinating with appropriate public safety agencies, as defined in F.S. 365.171, that are designated as first responders to a school's campus to conduct a tour of such campus once every three (3) years and to provide recommendations related to school safety. Completion of such tours and any recommendations must be documented in each school's security risk assessment within the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool;

Any changes related to school safety, emergency issues, and recommendations provided by the public safety agencies will be considered as part of the recommendations by the School Safety Specialist to the Board.

6. providing or arranging for the provision of youth mental health awareness and assistance training to all school personnel as set forth in F.S. 1012.584.

By July 1st of each year, the Superintendent shall certify to the FLDOE, in a format determined by the FLDOE, that at least eighty percent (80%) of school personnel in elementary, middle, and high schools have received the training required under this paragraph.

The training program shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. an overview of mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders and the need to reduce the stigma of mental illness;
 - b. information on the potential risk factors and warning signs of emotional disturbance, mental illness, or substance use disorders, including, but not limited to, depression, anxiety, psychosis, eating disorders, and self-injury, as well as common treatments for those conditions and how to assess those risks; and
 - c. information on how to engage at-risk students with skills, resources, and knowledge required to assess the situation, and how to identify and encourage the student to use appropriate professional help and other support strategies, including, but not limited to, peer, social, or self-help care.
7. completing surveys provided by the Office of Safe Schools regarding Safe-School officer assignments;

8. investigating and responding to notices from the Office of Safe Schools containing suspected deficiencies at an LWCS School.

C. Identification of and Corrections to Instances of Noncompliance with Florida Laws and Rules Relating to Safety

The School Safety Specialist is responsible for identifying and correcting instances of noncompliance with F.A.C. 6A-1.0018 or any other Florida laws or rules relating to safety at any LWCS school. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. resolving deficiencies relating to Safe-School officer coverage by no later than the next school day;
2. notifying the Office of Safe Schools within twenty-four (24) hours at SafeSchools@fldoe.org of any deficiencies relating to Safe-School officer coverage and any instance of noncompliance that is determined to be an imminent threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff. The notification must contain particularized facts beyond noncompliance with rules or Florida Statutes that explain the imminent threat;
3. notifying the Office of Safe Schools within three (3) days at SafeSchools@fldoe.org of any instance of noncompliance not corrected within sixty (60) days;

D. Response to Notice of Suspected Deficiency from the Office of Safe Schools

The School Safety Specialist is responsible for notifying the Superintendent of any notice of suspected deficiency the School Safety Specialist receives from the Office of Safe Schools.

When the notice of suspected deficiency concerns a failure to have a Safe-School officer established or assigned at each school facility, as required by F.S. 1006.12, the School Safety Specialist must respond in writing and verify to the Office of Safe Schools that the school(s) identified in the notice have a Safe-School officer on site by the next school day. In all other cases, the School Safety Specialist must respond in writing to the Office of Safe Schools within five (5) school days and verify that the District or school has corrected the suspected deficiency, or within that same time period, submit a written plan describing how the District will bring the identified school(s) into compliance. The plan must include an estimated date of completion and an explanation of alternate security measures designed to maintain a safe learning environment.

Recommendations of the School Safety Specialist

Based on the findings of the school security risk assessment, the School Safety Specialist must provide recommendations to the Superintendent and Board which identify strategies and activities that the Board should implement in order to address the findings and improve school safety and security. The School Safety Specialist's report to the Board shall also include school safety recommendations made by public safety agencies. The Board will review the school security risk assessment findings and the recommendations of the School Safety Specialist at a publicly noticed Board meeting to provide the public an opportunity to hear the Board members discuss and act. The *Critical Incident Response Plan* is, however, confidential and is not subject to review or release as a public record.

The School Safety Specialist shall report the school security risk assessment findings and recommendations and the Board's action(s) to the Office of Safe Schools no later than thirty (30) days after the Board meeting and prior to November 1 of each year. The School Safety Specialist shall also submit a best-practices assessment in the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool.

As a part of the *Critical Incident Response Plan*, the Board shall verify that it has procedures in place for keeping schools safe and drug-free that include (see also, form 8330 F15 entitled Checklist of Policies and Guidelines Addressing No Child Left Behind Act of 2001):

- A. safety and security best practices;
- B. appropriate and effective school discipline policies that prohibit disorderly conduct, the illegal possession of weapons, and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs by students;
- C. security procedures at school and while students are on the way to and from school;
- D. prevention activities that are designed to maintain safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments;
- E. a code of conduct or policy for all students that clearly states the responsibilities of students, teachers, and administrators in maintaining a classroom environment that:
 - 1. allows a teacher to communicate effectively with all students in the class;
 - 2. allows all students in the class the opportunity to learn;

3. has consequences that are fair, and developmentally appropriate;
 4. considers the student and the circumstances of the situation; and
 5. is enforced accordingly.
- F. School administrators have the responsibility of reporting deficiencies with compliance visits. Visits must be reported to the Superintendent and school safety specialist immediately with action plan steps if needed.

Failure to comply with the school safety policy and implementation in accordance with HB1473 will result in further discipline pursuant to the LWCS progressive discipline policy up to termination.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINARY ACTION

LWCS expects employees to comply with the company's standards of behavior, which include school safety policies, procedures, and performance, and to correct any noncompliance with these standards.

Under normal circumstances, LWCS endorses a policy of progressive discipline in which it attempts to provide employees with notice of deficiencies and an opportunity to improve. It does, however, retain the right to administer discipline in any manner it sees fit. This policy does not modify the status of employees as employees at will or in any way restrict the company's right to bypass the disciplinary procedures suggested.

The following steps are suggested in the discipline procedure. All steps should be documented in the employee's personnel file.

Forms of Discipline:

Step 1: Informal Discussion. When a performance problem is first identified, the nature of the problem and the action necessary to correct it should be thoroughly discussed with the employee.

Step 2: Counseling. If a private informal discussion with the employee has not resulted in corrective action, following a thorough investigation, the supervisor should meet with the employee and (a) review the problem, (b) permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, (c) advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, (d) inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further disciplinary action that may include discharge, and (e) issue a counseling notice to the employee.

Step 3: Reprimand. If satisfactory performance and corrective action are not achieved under Steps 1 and 2, the supervisor and a representative from the HR department should meet with the employee in private and proceed via (a) through (d) above and issue a reprimand notice to the employee.

Step 4: Suspension. Supervisors have the authority to temporarily remove employees from the workplace, with or without pay, if approved in advance by the department director and the director of HR. An exempt employee generally may not be suspended without pay for less than a full day, and the suspension must be related to written workplace conduct rules applicable to all employees, such as a written policy prohibiting sexual harassment or workplace violence.

Step 5: Failure to improve. Failure to improve performance or behavior after the written warning or suspension can result in termination.

In cases involving serious misconduct, or any time the supervisor determines it is necessary, such as a major breach of policy or violation of law, the procedures contained above may be disregarded. Typically, the supervisor should suspend the employee immediately (with or without pay), and an investigation of the incidents leading up to the suspension should be conducted to determine if any further action, such as termination, should be taken.

Safety and Security Best Practices

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures for the prevention of violence on school grounds, including the assessment and intervention of individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community.

The Board shall adopt, in coordination with local law enforcement agencies and local governments, a family reunification plan to reunite students and employees with their families in the event that a school is closed or unexpectedly evacuated due to a natural or man-made disaster. The reunification plan must be reviewed annually and updated, as applicable.

1. Within the first (5) five days of the school beginning all stakeholders must watch and document the Fortify FL video.
2. Active assailant response training for all stakeholders must be provided. Compliance to “run, hide, and fight” must be implemented and maintained within ten (10) days of the school year beginning.
3. Within ten (10) days, a lock drill must be conducted.
4. All drills must be maintained in the school administration’s Schoology “Black Folder”.
5. Any safety violations should be reported to the school’s administration within 24 hours of the safety breach. The school administration shall investigate and remedy the reported violation within 24 hours.

Persistently Dangerous Schools

The Board recognizes that not only Federal, but also State law requires that the District report annually incidents that meet the statutory definition of violent criminal offenses that occur in a school, on school grounds, on a school conveyance, or at a school-sponsored activity, as well as those incidents that would be a Gun-Free Schools Act violation. It is further understood that the Florida Department of Education will then use the data for the offenses identified in the Department's Unsafe School Choice Option Policy to determine whether or not a school is considered "persistently dangerous".

Pursuant to the Board's stated intent to provide a safe school environment, school administrators are expected to respond appropriately to any and all violations of the Student Code of Conduct, especially those of a serious, violent nature. In any year where the number of reportable incidents of violent criminal offenses in any school exceeds the threshold number established in State law, the Superintendent shall discuss this at the annual meeting for the purpose of reviewing the *Critical Incident Response Plan* so that a plan of corrective action can be developed and implemented in an effort to reduce the number of these incidents in the subsequent year and/or convene a meeting of the building administrator, representative(s) of the local law enforcement agencies, and any other individuals deemed appropriate for the purpose of developing a plan of corrective action that can be implemented in an effort to reduce the number of these incidents in the subsequent year.

The Superintendent shall make a report to the Board about this plan of corrective action and shall recommend approval and adoption of it.

In the unexpected event that the number of reportable incidents in three (3) consecutive school years exceeds the statutory threshold and the school is identified as persistently dangerous, the Superintendent shall offer parents and eligible students the opportunity to transfer to another school within the LWCS that serves the same grades. If there is another school within the LWCS serving the same grades, the transfer shall be completed in a timely manner. If there is not another school within the LWCS that serves the same grades, then parents and eligible students will be advised that, although Federal and State law provides for an opportunity to transfer, they will be unable to do so.

In addition, the Superintendent shall discuss this at the annual meeting for the purpose of reviewing the *Disaster Preparedness Plan* so that a plan of corrective action can be developed and implemented in an effort to reduce the number of these incidents in the subsequent year and/or convene a meeting of the building administrator, representative(s) of the local law enforcement agencies, and any other individuals deemed appropriate for the purpose of developing a plan of corrective action that can be implemented in an effort to reduce the number of these incidents in the subsequent year.

Victims of Violent Crime

The Board further recognizes that, despite the diligent efforts of school administrators and staff to provide a safe school environment, an individual student may be a victim of a violent crime in a school, on school grounds, on a school conveyance, or at a school-sponsored activity. In accordance with Federal and State law, the parents or the eligible student shall be offered the opportunity to transfer to another school within the LWCS that serves the same grades. If there is another school serving the same grades, the transfer shall be completed in a timely manner. If there is no other school serving the same grades, the parents or eligible students will be advised that, although they have the right to transfer, they will be unable to do so.

Threat Assessment Teams

The purpose of the threat assessment team is to establish a process focusing on behaviors that pose a threat to school safety while serving as a preventative measure to identify needs and provide support to students. This process is also known as a care assessment. Threat assessment teams are responsible for the coordination of resources and assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students consistent with the model policies and procedures developed by the Office of Safe Schools which addresses early identification, evaluation, early intervention, and student support.

Each school-based threat assessment team must meet as often as needed to fulfill its duties of assessing and intervening with persons whose behavior may pose a threat to school staff or students, but no less than monthly. Threat assessment teams shall maintain documentation of their meetings, including meeting dates and times, team members in attendance, cases discussed, and actions taken.

A. Location and Membership

1. Threat assessment teams are located at each school in the LWCS and are composed of individuals with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement. All members of the threat assessment team must be involved in the threat assessment process and final decision-making.
 - a. The counseling team member must be a school-based mental health services provider who is able to access student mental health records.
 - b. The law enforcement team member must be a sworn law enforcement officer, as defined by F.S. 943.10, including a School Resource officer, school safety officer, or other active law enforcement officer. At a minimum, a law enforcement officer serving on a threat assessment team must have access to local

Records Management System information, the Criminal Justice Information System, and the Florida Crime Information Center and National Crime Information Center databases. Officers serving on school-based threat assessment teams must also have clearance to review Criminal Justice Information and Criminal History Record Information.

2. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to create procedures for the purpose of:
 - a. identifying team participants by position and role;
 - b. designating the individuals (by position) who are responsible for gathering and investigating information; and
 - c. identifying the steps and procedures to be followed from initiation to conclusion of the threat assessment inquiry or investigation.

B. Responsibilities and Activities of Threat Assessment Teams

The responsibilities and activities of threat assessment teams include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. identification of individuals in the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported and provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self;
2. utilizing the Department's behavior threat assessment instrument developed pursuant to F.S. 1001.212;
3. consult with law enforcement when a student exhibits a pattern of behavior, based upon previous acts or the severity of an act, that would pose a threat to school safety;
4. consult with law enforcement when a student commits more than one (1) misdemeanor to determine if the act should be reported to law enforcement;
5. if a preliminary determination is made by the threat assessment team that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to himself/herself or others, the threat assessment team will report its determination to the Superintendent;

The Superintendent shall immediately attempt to notify the student's

parent or legal guardian. However, nothing in this paragraph shall preclude District personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat.

6. if a preliminary determination is made by the threat assessment team that a student poses a threat of violence to himself/herself or others or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or need for assistance, authorized members of the threat assessment team may obtain criminal history record information pursuant to F.S. 985.04(1);

Members of the threat assessment team may not disclose any criminal history record information obtained pursuant to this paragraph or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the threat assessment team.

7. create procedures related to engaging behavioral health crisis resources.

All reported threats, even those determined not to be a threat, must be documented by the threat assessment team. Documentation must include the evaluation process and any resultant action.

C. Sharing of Information

The LWCS and other agencies and individuals that provide services to students experiencing, or at risk of, an emotional disturbance or a mental illness and any service or support provider contracting with such agencies may share with each other records or information that are confidential or exempt from disclosure under F.S. Chapter 119 if the records or information are reasonably necessary to ensure access to appropriate services for the student or to ensure the safety of the student or others.

D. Immediate Mental Health or Substance Abuse Crisis

If an immediate mental health or substance abuse crisis is suspected, school personnel shall follow policies established by the threat assessment team to engage behavioral health crisis resources. Behavioral health crisis resources, including, but not limited to, mobile crisis teams and school resource officers trained in crisis intervention shall provide emergency intervention and assessment, make recommendations, and refer the student for appropriate services. Onsite school personnel shall report all such situations and actions taken to the threat assessment team, which shall contact the other agencies involved with the student and any known service providers to share information and coordinate any necessary follow-up actions. Upon the student's transfer to a different school, the threat assessment team shall verify that any intervention services provided to the student remain in place until the threat assessment team of the receiving school independently determines the need for intervention

services.

E. Behavior Threat Assessment Instrument Training

All threat assessment team members must be trained on the Department's behavior threat assessment instrument in accordance with Florida law.

F. Office of Safe Schools Reporting

Each threat assessment team shall report quantitative data on its activities to the Office of Safe Schools, including all activities during the previous school year, and shall utilize the threat assessment database developed pursuant to F.S. 1001.212. The School Safety Specialist will report this information to the Office of Safe Schools. Additionally, the School Safety Specialist must report the following information utilizing the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool by October 1 of each year:

1. For the 2021-2022 school year, the total number of threat assessments conducted, the number of transient threats, and the number of substantive threats; and,
2. Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, the number of threat assessments conducted, the number of transient threats, and the number of substantive threats as well as the gender, race, and grade level of all students assessed by the threat assessment team.

Referral to Mental Health Services

All school personnel who receive training pursuant to F.S. 1012.584 shall be notified of the mental health services that are available in the system.

Students who are referred to a school-based or community-based mental health service provider for mental health screening for the identification of mental health concerns and ensure that the assessment of students at risk for mental health disorders occurs within 15 days of referral. School-based mental health services must be initiated within 15 days after identification and assessment, and support by community-based mental health service providers for students who are referred for community-based mental health services must be initiated within 30 days after the school or district makes a referral. 1011.62(13)3 a, F.S.

School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting

The superintendent is responsible for ensuring the accurate and timely reporting of incidents related to school safety and discipline in accordance with Florida law and rules promulgated by FLDOE. Parents of LWCS students have a right to access school safety and discipline incidents as reported pursuant to F.S. 1006.07 (9) and will be timely notified of threats, unlawful acts, and significant emergencies pursuant to F.S. 1006.07 (4) and (7).

Student Crime Watch Program

The Board shall implement a Student Crime Watch Program to promote responsibility among students and improve school safety. Through a Board resolution, the Board will require each school principal to distribute information (including a reference to Policy 8406) at their respective schools notifying students and the community as to how they can anonymously relay information concerning unsafe and potentially harmful, dangerous, violent, or criminal activities, or the threat of these activities, to appropriate public safety agencies and school officials.

Promotion of School Safety Awareness

The Board shall promote the use of the Florida Department of Education's mobile suspicious reporting tool ("FortifyFL") on all LWCS websites, in newsletters, on school campuses, and in school publications. FortifyFL shall also be installed on all mobile devices issued to students and bookmarked on all computer devices issued to students.

Records Related to Compliance with F.A.C. 6A-1.0018

The LWCS and all school staff will retain records demonstrating that the requirements of F.A.C. 6A-1.008 are met and provide such records to the Office of Safe Schools upon request.

F.S. 1006.07

F.S. 1006.13

F.S. 1006.1493

Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool

Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates (U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education)

F.A.C. 6A-1.0018

CS/CS/HB 1473

ADOPTED: 7/11/2024

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL