

Great Oaks Charter School District-wide Safety Plan

Great Oaks Charter School, also known as GO-NYC, is committed to ensuring that our schools are safe, secure, and orderly 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 GO-NYC 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.

The Code of Conduct and District-wide Safety Plan reflects the input and recommendations of the District-wide Safety Team, the composition of which is described below.

The following highlights key components of GO-NYC's Code of Conduct and District-wide Safety Plan. Additional information is found in the Chancellor's Regulations and other policy documents noted at the end of this document.

1 - District-wide School Safety Plan:

This Plan incorporates Great Oaks 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; and contacting and notifying law enforcement officials. The Plan also 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 school 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 Plan.

Great Oaks Charter School designates a Chief Emergency Officer, and a Deputy to serve in the Chief Emergency Officer's absence. The Chief Emergency Officer is 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; and emergency response drills.

The District-wide Safety Plan is reviewed annually by the Chief Emergency Officer together with the District-wide Safety Team. The Chief Emergency Officer is the Director of Operations, Tiffany Cunningham. In the event of an absence, this role will be fulfilled by the Principal, Troy Wilson.

1. **District-wide Safety Team:** The District-wide Team includes various staff members from the Great Oaks Leadership and Operations Team, including:

- Great Oaks Culture Team
- Great Oaks Social Work Team
- Great Oaks Instructional Team
- Great Oaks Operations Team

2. **General Response Protocols (GRP):**

The following are the emergency response protocols that 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 Chancellor's Regulation A -412, which sets forth the policies and procedures regarding contacting the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and 911 (see Key Documents below).

The NYC Department of Education and the NYPD School Safety Division Counterterrorism Unit created these protocols to allow schools to immediately and safely respond to various types of emergencies that may occur both inside schools, or within the surrounding community. 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. Administrative teams, Building Response Teams, and BRT members will mobilize to the

designated command post for further direction. 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, including BRT, 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 the 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.

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 the evacuation folder (with attendance sheet and Assembly Cards).
- Lead students to evacuation locations 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.

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.

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.

3. 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 assaults 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 Chancellor's Regulation A-412 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 Chancellor's Regulation A-755 and policies (see Key Documents below).

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 as set forth in Chancellor's Regulation A-411.

1. School Safety Personnel:

Great Oaks Charter School employs security personnel from an outside vendor to ensure the safety of students and staff. The security personnel aids in ensuring the safety of the building before and after operating hours.

The school works in conjunction with the local NYPD precinct to foster a positive relationship with our students and to keep abreast of developments within the neighborhood. Great Oaks partnership with the NYPD extends to crossing guards provided during the school year and extends to the duration of Summer School.

2. Training and Drills:

The Principal and Director of Operations completes mandatory Emergency Readiness training, which is valid for two years. Completion of the training will be provided with a certificate from the FDNY in the form of a D10 license. A copy of active licenses are kept in the Main Office.

All staff must receive annual training on building response, as well as the early detection of potentially violent behavior. The Annual Emergency Building Response is provided to staff in the summer and as needed throughout the school year for new hires.

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. Review materials are made available to teachers for this purpose in the form of PowerPoint slides.

Information addressing school emergency procedures, including the GRP, is available on the Great Oaks website and readily available to families in the Main Office.

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.

The Great Oaks BRT conducts a debrief with school leaders to assess effectiveness and identify any areas where corrective action may be required. BRT meetings are held monthly to review modifications to the BRT plan.

3. 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 (as set forth above) and to notify, without delay, the school community, especially the parents of children enrolled at the school. Great Oaks follows the same policies and procedures as the DOE for notifying parents are described in Chancellor's Regulations and policies (see Key Documents below). Pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-415 parents, staff, and elected officials may voluntarily subscribe to receive emergency notifications through electronic text messages, phone calls, and/or electronic mail through Great Oaks chosen messaging program. In addition, 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.

4. Building-level School Safety Plan:

Pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-414, (see Key Documents below) Great Oaks has established a School Safety Committee to develop a building-level school safety plan. In addition, Great Oaks has established 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 plans must be consistent with a safety plan template developed by the Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) and must be updated annually. Building level safety information that can be shared with staff and families is available, upon request, from each principal in the staff or parent version of the school safety plan. A template of the parent's guide is included in the Key Documents section below. Pursuant to state education law, building level emergency response plans must be confidential and must not be disclosed.

5. Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)

The Great Oaks Continuity of Operations Plan ensures that services continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, communicable disease, and technological or attack-related emergencies. This plan is annually reviewed by the DOE, with oversight by New York City Emergency Management. (NYCEM).

The school's COOP plan addresses a number of emergency related areas, including, but not limited to the following:

Essential Functions: The critical activities performed after a disruption of normal activities and the supplies, equipment, technology or persons/needed to ensure the continuance of these essential functions. The plan will also include a plan to shift to remote learning in the event facilities are not operable.

Orders of Succession: Provisions for the assumption of senior agency offices during an emergency in the event that any of those officials are unavailable to execute their duties.

Delegations of Authority: Identification, by position, of the authorities for making policy determinations and decisions at central, field, and all other levels and locations.

Continuity Facilities: Locations, other than the primary facilities, used to carry out essential functions, particularly in a continuity event. Continuity Facilities, or “Alternate facilities”, refers to not only other locations, but also nontraditional options such as working at home, telecommuting, and mobile-office concepts.

Continuity Communications: Communications that provide the capability to perform essential functions, in conjunction with other agencies, under all conditions.

Vital Records Management: the identification, protection and ready availability of electronic and hard copy documents, references, records, information systems, data management software and equipment needed to support essential functions during a continuity situation.

Human Capital: during a continuity event, emergency employees and other special categories of employees who are activated by an agency to perform assigned response duties.

Tests, Training, and Exercises: measures to ensure that an agency’s continuity plan is capable of supporting the continued execution of the agency’s essential functions throughout the duration of a continuity event.

Devolution of Control and Direction: capability to transfer statutory authority and responsibility for essential functions from an agency’s primary operating staff and facilities to other agency employees and facilities.

Reconstitution: The process by which surviving and/or replacement agency personnel resume normal agency operations from the original or replacement primary operating facility.

In order to address health and safety concerns related to the Covid 19 pandemic, Great Oaks has developed specific policies, procedures and resources for supervisors, staff, students, parents and others who utilize buildings under Great Oaks management. These are regularly reviewed, revised, and disseminated, as appropriate to address changing circumstances and ensure effective implementation. Public facing resources can be found on the [DOE website](#).

6. Code of Conduct

The Great Oaks Discipline Policy incorporates policies and procedures governing student conduct including the behavioral expectations to support student learning, 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.

1. Discipline Code:

The Discipline Code 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.

2. Intervention Strategies:

Restorative Approach

As a school, we recognize that the measures we take to discipline students often have greater impact than simply holding students accountable. Oftentimes in schools, students are disconnected from how their actions may have affected their school community and thus develop a distrust of school and adults, once they receive a consequence. The school employs a method of trust to help students understand the impact of their actions and is known as "Restorative Practices." Operating under this model, staff members will always seek to use classroom/behavior management strategies that help students understand how their actions and choices affect others.

As a school we utilize restorative practices that are a set of both formal and informal strategies intended to meet five goals:

1. Build positive relationships
2. Reduce and prevent harmful behavior
3. Resolve conflict and hold individuals accountable
4. Repair harm
5. Address and discuss the needs of the school community
6. Methods of Restorative Practices at GO-NYC

Great Oaks will also use other restorative practices such as, Circle Process, Impromptu and Formal Restorative Conference, and Student Support Cycle. The process in which these methods are utilized will be determined by school staff. The specific next steps in the cycle will be determined by the school leader.

School leaders and the Great Oaks Culture Team receive and provide training on restorative practices annually.

Where appropriate, progressive age-appropriate disciplinary responses must be effectuated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Chancellor's Regulation A-443 and the Discipline Code. (see Key Documents below)

3. Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying:

It is the policy of Great Oaks 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.

Great Oaks will send consistent messages to students throughout the school year that bullying is not part of our school's culture and will not be tolerated. Prevention may include, but is not limited to the following:

The school will maintain rules prohibiting cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation and will establish appropriate consequences for those who bully other students.

As part of our character education program, the school will provide time and age appropriate curricula for all classes to discuss bullying in school and the effects of it.

The school will work to protect the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications. The school will discuss GO-NYC core values with legal guardians during orientations.

The school's Wednesday PD program will contain a time to discuss promoting positive school culture including character development and bullying prevention.

The school will use common time with students to discuss cyber safety and cyberbullying issues with students.

4. 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 will 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 Family Commitment Policy (as outlined in the student handbook).

The Family Engagement Manager hosts monthly parent meetings and workshops that aim to support parents in their needs and form a committee of parent volunteers.

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 are encouraged to reach out to the teachers. If teachers are in need of additional support, the Great Oaks Leadership team will help create interventions and supports to best aid the student(s) and family.

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.

5. Accessibility (Building and Physical):

Students, staff, and visitors with accessibility needs and in need of assistance in accessing Great Oaks will be assisted by able-bodied staff members. The school is located in a partially accessible building and those in mobility assisted devices will be offered the support of the school in navigating entry.

6. Accessibility (Digital):

Great Oaks Charter School is committed to creating and supporting learning environments that reflect the diversity of New York City. The school strives to meet the following accessibility standards and to ensure our digital offerings are ADA Compliant. It is our policy to ensure that everyone, including persons with disabilities, has full and equal access to our digital offerings and aid in technology assistance.