

CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAFETY, SECURITY & HUMAN RELATIONS PLAN

CREATING THE BEST POSSIBLE LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS

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SAFETY, SECURITY & HUMAN
RELATIONS PLAN

THE CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE STUDENTS, STAFF AND VISITOR WHO ENTER EACH BUILDING.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number one priority of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District is to preserve the safety of students, faculty and the administration. It is important that the children of the district receive the benefit of a quality education in a safe and secure learning environment.

Over the years, the District has followed an established set of procedures with respect to school security. The Administration regularly reviews existing policies to ensure that the procedures are consistent with other large urban districts across the nation.

On October 10, 2007, faculty and students did exactly what they were trained to do during a “Code Blue” emergency. The students immediately retreated to a safe location and took the necessary precautions to protect themselves from harm. The teachers worked quickly to ensure that the safety of each student was maintained; the teachers moved students into secure classrooms where access could be prevented. Together, administrators, teachers and students took care of each other in the face of imminent danger, and for that we are indeed proud.

It is important that CMSD continue to examine and refine safety and security procedures. However, what is equally important is the need to remain focused on the relationships that are developed between students, parents, staff, and school community. CMSD has a wide number of programs designed to work with our students and parents as part of the school day. Moreover, CMSD has additional resources before and after school and on weekends, to serve youth. Many programs also function during the summer when school is not in session. These programs include:

- BRICK, (Brotherhood, Respect, Intelligence, Conduct, and Knowledge) a teen mentoring program;
- WAVE, a peer mediation program;
- Youth Council, anti-bullying workshops and training sessions for staff members;
- Trained counselors, social workers, and psychologists; and
- Family engagement programs and the District Ombudsman.

What happened in Cleveland is a symptom of a larger national issue. Violence in communities nationwide and in schools across the country has changed the environment in which youth grow and mature. It will take the community working together to address this significant social issue. The Cleveland Metropolitan School District is committed to this goal.

Furthermore, CMSD will do everything possible to create a safe learning and working environment. Additional steps are being taken everyday to follow through on the promise of safety, security and enhanced human relations; creating the plan dubbed **“Hard ware” and “Human ware.”**

HUMAN RELATIONS – INITIAL ACTIONS

In the days following the incident at SuccessTech Academy, the District took immediate actions to comfort those directly impacted and reassure others of the guidelines of compassion and assistance.

- CMSD officials called the home of every student to offer support services.
- The District offered counseling services for students and parents at City recreation centers.
- The CEO and members of the Board of Education met with the principal and teachers of SuccessTech Academy to lend morale and administrative support.
- The District reminded staff of the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) available under the benefit program.
- On October 12, 2007, the Administration provided all principals and teachers with a faculty in-service focusing on relationships strategies with students, parents and community members. The presentation included shared research strategies for identifying children in crisis.

HUMAN RELATIONS – TASKS COMPLETED BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2007

District schools re-opened on Monday, October 15, 2007 and SuccessTech Academy re-opening Tuesday, October 16, 2007. CMSD focused on putting the following measures in place:

SuccessTech

- Provided SuccessTech Academy teachers additional time in their classrooms prior to the re-opening of schools to prepare them to welcome and receive students.
- Held a SuccessTech Academy Parent “Open House” on the evening of October 15, 2007 which gave parents and/or guardians the opportunity to tour the school, review new security procedures, and talk directly with District administrators.
- Maintained communication with SuccessTech Academy incident victims as they began the healing and recovery process.
- Deployed additional District and community counselors and social workers, and psychologists to SuccessTech Academy for students, parents, and staff members.

District-Wide

- Assessed additional support needs for all CMSD schools.
- Provided staff with a list of available agencies and services to support students, parents, and staff members. Coordinated the deployment of external agencies to ensure all buildings were properly supported.
- Deployed additional district counselors, social workers, and psychological support services where support was needed.

HUMAN RELATIONS – FUTURE TASKS

CMSD will look at long-term security procedures “Hard ware” and review current social services “Human Ware” and reach out to the local community for additional suggestions and advice to enhance the delivery of services in the school district.

SuccessTech

- Provide additional training in the WAVE (Winning Against Violent Environments) program. WAVE is a peer mediation program for teens.

- Work with the City Year Young Heroes program to engage students in ongoing conversations about concerns in their school.

District-Wide

- Host a state-wide emergency summit on safety, security and human relations. This will provide the District as well as other school districts around the state with a forum to dialogue on issues of safety and human relations. Determine what can be learned to further strengthen the proactive support systems in CMSD and other school communities.
- Lead the creation of a Metropolitan Compassion Network. This program would connect city, county and regional support resources in order to work collaboratively in an effort to support and assist Cleveland area children.
- Continue to train and manage anti-social behaviors and effective classroom strategies as part of the collaborative agreement with the Cleveland Teachers Union.
- Ensure all appropriate staff (building principals, teachers, para-professionals, etc.) are informed in a confidential manner about the behavioral history of students. A proactive strategy will prepare staff members to assist and respond to students in need.
- Provide additional website and media resources to ensure students, parents and community members have access to available resources and programs.
- Continue established community partnerships with area agencies and programs. Several of these include:
 - **Girl Power:** An after-school program that stresses strong character, values and leadership as a tool for success. The program educates young ladies on high-risk behaviors such as: low self-esteem, poor academics, violent and aggressive behaviors, and/or the early on-set of sexual activity.
 - **Domestic Violence Prevention:** This program is sponsored in conjunction with the Cleveland Municipal Courts and various domestic violence shelters in Cuyahoga County. The program is aimed at providing information to all 9th and 10th graders on the severity and reality of domestic violence. Students are exposed to the legal ramifications as well as the emotional, physical and mental stresses that are a direct result of domestic violence.
 - **Anti-Violence Summit:** The Anti-Violence Summit is comprised of area experts of various specializations that focus on violence issues. Students are coached in techniques that can be used to diffuse potentially violent situations. The program also engages students on discussions that are

centered on the issues that are currently affecting both their schools and communities.

- **T.E.A.M.S (Teaching and Educating Against the Misuse of Substances):** The program is designed to educate and inform elementary and high school students on the dangers of substance abuse and negative decision-making, by promoting positive self-images, self-empowerment, and post-secondary planning.
- **BRICK (Brotherhood, Respect, Intelligence, Conduct, and Knowledge):** Topics target specific situations that are identified as factors that hinder the success of male students, such as truancy, involvement in gangs, alcohol use, abuse, access to services and negative stereotypes. Leadership and development programs foster positive personal development through team mentoring and community involvement. The program focuses on citizenship, the value of education, substance abuse, violence prevention, wellness, STD prevention and enhancing communication and presentation skills to build the necessary skill for success.
- **M.E. (Motivation through Excellence):** The M.E. program utilizes the arts and cultural presentation to promote anti-violence and substance abuse awareness in the student's home-school community. The program is literacy-based and focuses on cultural awareness and heritage as a means of promoting positive self-identity, social competency, and problem-solving skills. The goal is to prevent students from failing during the school year as a result of low academic performance, poor attendance, and/or chronic suspensions.
- **S.A.D.D. (Students Against Destructive Decisions):** This program organizes students around issues that affect their lives and well being. Three primary goals include:
 1. Alert students to the dangers of alcohol, drugs, and other destructive behaviors,
 2. Provide a positive peer group to influence healthy decision making; to conduct community alcohol and other drug awareness programs, and
 3. Assist in organizing peer counseling programs which address the needs of today's youth.
- **Parent Educational Workshops:** Activities for parents include bi-monthly parent meetings, in-school parent activities, home visits, teacher referrals and home/school program activities.

SAFETY AND SECURITY – INITIAL ACTIONS

The District took the following immediate actions to work with and reassure our external partners in learning:

- Continued to enhance the partnerships with:
 - Cleveland Division of Police (CPD)
 - Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA)
 - Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department
 - Regional Transit Authority (RTA)
- Continued the implementation of Safe Walking Routes initiative.
- Met with all building principals, who in turn, met with teachers and staffs to review the incident at SuccessTech Academy and then provide additional professional development on safety and security.
- Met with the Cleveland Teachers Union to review CMSD safety procedures and discuss future plans to keep students and teachers safe.
- Provided principals and teachers with a faculty in-service day on October 12, 2007 to review the District's safety plans, evacuation site relocation plan, police information, bomb threat procedures, security signals, fire drills, tornado drills, lock down drills, code blue and code red procedures.
- Hired, trained and placed additional security guards at key locations throughout the district.

SAFETY AND SECURITY – TASKS COMPLETED BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 15

SuccessTech Academy

- Prepared for the return of SuccessTech Academy students on Tuesday, October 16, 2007.
- Installed a metal detector at SuccessTech Academy.
- In addition to the current security guard, CMSD assigned an armed security officer to SuccessTech Academy.

- Prepared an assembly at SuccessTech Academy to review safety and security procedures and to stress the importance of interpersonal relationships.

District-Wide

- Emphasized the CMSD Safe Schools Hotline (771-SAFE) as a means for students and parents to report unsafe or suspicious behaviors to authorities.
- Provided students with a letter to take home reviewing the CMSD security plan.
- Re-issued and reinforced directive that all doors will be locked in every school. One door was designated as the single secured entrance.
- Addressed additional security needs for all of our buildings through various funding sources.
- Presented student assemblies to review the CMSD safety and security procedures and the importance of communications.

SAFETY AND SECURITY – FUTURE TASKS

CMSD will implement long-term projects and review current security procedures to enhance the safety plan.

- Meet with a professional security consultant firm and review each building to identify security weaknesses and make recommendations to enhance safety.
- Convene four (4) community meetings at various locations throughout the city to discuss school safety.
- Inventory metal detectors, cameras and door buzzers and identify additional needs.
- Continue to assess short and long term security enhancements.
- Redeploy CMSD safety and security officers according to need.
- Install metal detectors in all schools.
- Hire, train, and assign additional security personnel where needed.