



Westminster Community Charter School

BEDS CODE 140600860874

District Safety Plan 2025-2026

NOTE: all sensitive/confidential information has been removed from this plan

Approved by Board of Trustees

August 25, 2025

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1. Introduction

The Westminster Community Charter School (WCCS) District (hereinafter known as “District”) considers health, safety and security of its students, staff, and visitors to be of the utmost importance and recognizes the responsibility to provide a safe learning environment. WCCS supports the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act and will facilitate the planning process to be prepared, protect its students, and staff, and disseminate information quickly to parents and guardians.

A. Purpose

The District-Wide School Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner’s Regulation 155.17. The District-Wide School Safety Plan is responsive to the school’s needs within the district and is consistent with the more detailed Building-Level Emergency Response Plans required at the school building level. In accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a, the Building-Level Emergency Response Plan will remain confidential and not be subject to disclosure. This will further ensure safety at the building level and reduce the potential for planned sabotage.

B. Vital Educational Agency Information

The information contained in the table below provides a profile of Westminster Community Charter School for the upcoming academic year.

Address:	24 Westminster Ave. Buffalo, NY 14215
The nearest cross street to the school is:	Bailey Avenue
Telephone Numbers:	(716) 816-3450
Fax Number:	(716) 838-7458
Email Address:	wccs@westminsterccs.org
Name of Principal:	Teresa Gerchman
Name(s) of Assistant Principal:	Corey Wilson
Name of Project Administrator:	Brian Macey
Name of Site Coordinator:	Teresa Gerchman
Grade Levels Served:	Kindergarten-8th
Number of Students:	420
Number of Faculty and Staff:	82
Number of Students with Special Needs:	49
Number of Student with Language Needs:	57
Languages Spoken in School:	English, Bengali, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese
School Hours (Sept-June):	6:45 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Extra-curricular Activities at School:	School based clubs, sports, YWCA after school program including extended hours as necessary

C. Identification of School Teams

Westminster Community Charter School has created a Building-level Emergency Response Team, an Emergency Response Team (team responsible for incident response) and a Post-Incident Response Team (appropriate school personnel, medical personnel and mental health counselors) who can assist a school community in coping with the aftermath of a violent incident or emergency. The Chain of Command is outlined in Appendix 1. The Principal of Westminster Community Charter School (WCCS) has been designated as the Chief Emergency Officer and the Site Coordinator, in charge in the event of an emergency or a violent incident.

D. Concept of Operations

General protocols reflected in the District-wide School Safety Plan guide the development and implementation of individual Building-level Emergency Response Plan. This Plan sets forth the general procedures and protocols to be adhered to at the school, essentially serving as the "safety" standard operating procedures. This includes the consistent use of plain language terminology for events and procedures to ensure understanding and to prevent confusion.

8 NYCRR Section 155.17 (e)(3) mandates that a copy of the Building-level Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and any amendments shall be filed with the appropriate local law enforcement agency and with the New York State Police within thirty days of adoption. School ERPs are confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article VI of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law.

E. Plan Review and Public Comment

The subsequent required annual review will be completed on or before September 1st of each year prior to approval by the Board of Trustees. Local officials, including police and fire responders, will be consulted for advice and assistance in revising the Safety Plan on an annual basis.

Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e) (3), a summary of this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The plan is to be adopted by the Board of Trustees of WCCS. Building-Level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law, the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law 2801- a. Full copies of the building-level plan will be provided to both local and state police within 30 days of adoption.

The WCCS District Safety Plan is a living document and should be updated as deemed necessary. The WCCS Safety Team will update the Plan as needed in accordance with Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Part 155.17. In addition, the Plan will be reviewed and, if appropriate, revised by the WCCS Safety Team after each emergency experienced during the year. The WCCS Safety Team Document Plan reviews, adoption, and revisions.

A Plan Revision Summary Sheet is used for the purpose of documenting plan revisions.

Plan Element Review Schedule

Description	Following Emergency or Known Changes	Annually
Review plan		X
WCCS holds a public hearing regarding plan review		X
Potential hazards are identified and assessed in safety inspection		X
WCCS response capabilities are assessed	X	X
Update floor plans	X	
Update contact information	X	
Update list of students and staff with special needs	X	X
Inventory employee emergency skills or experience		X
Amendments to plan are submitted to Buffalo Police and New York State Police	X	X
Roles of the WCCS Safety Team are defined and members are identified	X	X
Roles of the WCCS Building-level Emergency Response Team are defined and members are identified	X	X
Roles of the WCCS Post-Incident Response Team are defined and members are identified	X	X

Following the Plan adoption, complete copies of the Plan are provided to the WCCS Chief Operating Officer, the Buffalo Police Department, New York State Police as listed below.

F. Plan Distribution List

1.	Laura Ferrino Westminster Community Charter School P.O. Box 3352 Buffalo, NY 14240-3352
2.	Buffalo Police E District 2767 Bailey Avenue Buffalo, NY 14215 Attention: Captain Aaron Young Phone: 716-851-4416 Cell: 716-361-6711
3.	New York State Police Troop A Headquarters 4525 West Saile Drive Batavia, New York 14020-1095 Attention: Trooper Stanley J. Edwards III Phone: 585-344-6200

The WCCS Site Coordinator is responsible for distributing the Plan to the parties listed in the table above. In addition, copies of the Plan are kept for use or reference before, during or after an emergency at the following locations at or near the school.

Locations of the Building-level Emergency Response Plan

1.	Westminster Community Charter School Main Office
2.	WCCS Administration Office at M&T Bank

2. Prevention and Intervention

A. Prevention Initiatives

Violence prevention and safe environment strategies require community-wide collaborative efforts that include students, families, teachers, administrators, staff, social and mental health professionals, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, security professionals, parents, and the business community. WCCS brought together the above to develop appropriate strategies and programs for a safe school environment for the students, staff, parents, and all that come to visit.

WCCS has established a climate that encourages and enables students, teachers, and parents/guardians to report threats and acts of violence. Teachers establish the first line of school safety because they have the most direct contact with students. They also have great insight into the potential problems and realistic solutions applicable to Westminster.

Some of these prevention and intervention strategies utilized at WCCS are (detailed description listed in Appendix 3):

- Restorative Practices
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- After School Program
- Uniform Policy
- Wellness Program
- Buffalo Police Department Programs
- Bullying Awareness
- Counseling Services
- Social Emotional Learning/Mental Health
- Threat Assessment Practices
- Workplace Violence Prevention Program
- Individualized Student Safety Plans

B. School Safety Assessment

School assessments of safety and the threats of safety are performed at the WCCS school building. Consultations are conducted with administrators and school staff involved in the incident or threat. When necessary, outside agencies are contacted to provide additional support, services, and recommendations.

3. Implementation of School Security:

A. Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Checks

Mandatory fingerprint clearance and criminal background checks are secured for all staff hired to work in the building in accordance with NYS Education Law and the Commissioner's regulations. Students are never left alone with any adult who is not employed or contracted by Westminster, including visitors, volunteers and/or student teachers. Should a new employee be issued an Emergency Conditional Clearance, the employee will not be left alone with students and unannounced classroom visits will be made by an administrator.

B. School Security Personnel

Outside security is hired to monitor the safety of the building throughout the school day. A memorandum of understanding between WCCS and the contracted agency is available in Appendix 4. Teachers and Teacher Aides/Assistants are assigned to serve in the capacity of safety monitors during arrival and dismissal. Staff on duty are outside monitoring the activities of students to ensure the safety of students arriving at Westminster, either by walking, car, or bus. Additional monitors are stationed at each of the entrance doors and in the halls to monitor students as they arrive and are dismissed from the school building.

All staff are instructed in the security regulations at one of the back-to-school professional development days (before school begins for students). Each teacher, teacher aide/assistant, office support, health services, food service and maintenance staff member engage in the monitoring of student, parent, and visitor behavior to ensure the safety of all at WCCS. All employees are potential emergency response workers and may be subject to assignment to emergency service activities.

C. Unauthorized Person on School Grounds

Definition: Any person entering the school that is not school personnel or an enrolled student. Staff and faculty should automatically recognize and question the presence of unauthorized persons in the school.

In accordance with the day-to-day Security Plan, all visitors must sign in at the Main Office and wear a visitors' badge.

If a person is suspected of posing a threat, the associated Building Safety plan will be initiated.

D. Identification of Potential Hazards

Potential Internal and External Hazards (specific) include but are not limited to:

- **Natural Disasters:** Being located in Western New York, the most common weather-related/natural disasters have been severe snowstorms and occasional rainstorms accompanied by high winds that may cause flooding, falling trees and power outages. This may result in cancellation of school or emergency early dismissal of students. While the school may not be damaged by such disasters, the building may be used as a community shelter if local authorities dictate the need. Earthquakes are another possible natural hazard, but uncommon.
- **Human-Caused Disasters:** There are some building specific man-made disasters that are possible. These may include, but not limited to car, bus, plane crashes, toxic substance spills/releases from highway accidents and chemical/hazardous material spills.
- **School Disasters:** Acts of violence (intruder, kidnapping, hostage, personal threat), terrorism, fire, explosion (gas, electrical, chemical), water line breaks, toxic substance release, contagious disease, or bomb threat (actual or implied), could occur at WCCS.
- **Detailed Situational Responses:** Threat and Hazard Specific Annexes refer to Criminal Offenses, Natural Hazards, Technological Hazards, Explosion and Fire, Systems Failure, Medical Emergencies, and Situational Student Response Plans are in the Building Level School Emergency Response Plan.

E. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

All staff, students, parents, visitors, and members of the community are part of creating a safe environment at WCCS. Everyone assumes a sense of personal responsibility for reducing the risk of violence and understands the early warning signs that help identify potentially violent behavior.

Warning signs of potentially violent behavior have been listed in the Building Safety Plan. WCCS trains all staff to develop awareness of early detection of potentially violent behaviors. Training is provided as in-service staff development. Materials are provided and supplemented by related topic links listed on the WCCS website.

Teachers, administrators, and other school support staff are on the frontline when it comes to observing troublesome behavior and making referrals to appropriate professionals, such as the school counselor, social workers, or nurse. They also play a significant role in responding to diagnostic information provided by specialists.

It is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence; however, teachers, administrators, counselors, other school staff, parents/guardians and students can recognize certain warning signs. These signs are used for identification and referral purposes. Only trained professionals make a diagnosis in consultation with the student's parents or guardian.

The WCCS community understands that, unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others. These signs require immediate response from school staff.

WCCS trains all staff to develop awareness of early detection of potentially violent behaviors. Training is provided as in-service staff development and materials are provided at that time.

4. Preparedness

Preparedness activities are the steps taken prior to an emergency to increase the school's capability to effectively react to an emergency and minimize the impact of an emergency on the school and the school's population. WCCS preparedness activities include the assignment and regular assessment of emergency management roles, training, drills and exercises, and initiation of public awareness activities.

A. Assignment of Emergency Management Roles

- The principal will act as the Incident Commander/Site Coordinator during most emergencies until such time as the emergency management activities are taken over by an outside agency such as a local emergency response agency.
- WCCS has a Building-level Safety (Emergency Response) Team. This team is under the direction of the Site Coordinator, the Principal. The purpose of this team is to assist the school community in responding to any emergency impacting the school or school grounds. The names, responsibility and contact information for the members of the Safety Team are included in Appendix 2.

B. Continuity of Command

- In the event of an emergency, the principal or a designee will serve as Incident Commander. The principal is designated as the person-in-charge and will remain at the determined command site, normally the school's main office at 24 Westminister Avenue, Buffalo, NY. All communication will be coordinated through the principal's office through the school's main number 716-816-3450 or Buffalo Promise Neighborhood at 1-

800-842-2265.

- As needed, the Incident Commander may be replaced by a member of a local emergency response agency. WCCS has established a chain of command to ensure continuity of operations. (See Appendix 1)

C. Training, Drills, and Exercises

WCCS is responsible for arranging and providing training programs for all personnel who are expected to participate in the emergency response and recovery process. It is the responsibility of the principal to organize, schedule, and document the training programs that are provided to school personnel. The main training takes place each year on one of the back-to-school professional development days (before class begins for students). Additional training is provided throughout the year as necessary.

The topics covered in the training programs provide:

- Information on the characteristics of hazards and their consequences and the implementation of emergency response actions, including protective measures, notification procedures, and available resources.
- Emergency Response training, focusing on individual roles.
- Emergency personnel with the variety of skills necessary to help reduce or eliminate hazards and to increase their effectiveness in responding to and recovering from emergencies of all types.
- Members of the staff have specialized training in AED and CPR.
- School-specific training based upon special needs populations within WCCS (e.g., dealing with bullying, gangs, students with disabilities, English Language Learners).
- Performing emergency drills from a trauma-informed perspective, reducing anxiety and stress around emergency procedures.

Parents are notified about the Emergency Procedures by means of a letter from the Principal that is distributed at the beginning of each school year. Parents are encouraged to discuss the necessity of practicing the emergency procedures through drills with their children to ease any anxiety or stress these may cause their child(ren). Additionally, staff will ensure the preparation, action, and debriefing of drills are done using trauma-informed practices to reduce additional stress. Parents are also provided with information on specific prevention and awareness topics such as Bullying, identifying the early signs of potential violence, Drug & Alcohol Awareness, etc. in the Principal's newsletters, parent meetings and the school's website. Communication with families on drills will continue to take place during the school year.

The school district, at least once every school year, shall conduct one test of its emergency response procedures listed under its Building-level Emergency Response Plans including evacuation, lockdown, and early dismissal. Eight (8) Evacuation Drills and four (4) Lockdown Drills will be completed by the school every school year. Parents will be notified prior to each lockdown drill by the Principal, in order to maintain a trauma-informed approach to these drills. Debriefings will occur after every drill or actual event.

D. Special Education Considerations

For students who have high sensory needs, are non-ambulatory, are identified as intellectually disabled or have other medical needs, the school will create a building specific evacuation plan that addresses the unique needs of this population when a situation calls for all staff and students to exit the building. Designated building administrators, special education teachers and SEL staff should work together to develop these plans.

5. Communication

A. Internal and External Communications

Upon being notified of an emergency, the Building Principal or Designee will contact law or emergency personnel in accordance with stated response protocol and request the closest response agency to ensure that the response to the incident is as rapid as possible.

In an event of an emergency, the Building Principal or Designee will notify all building occupants to take the appropriate protective action. WCCS has developed a protocol to disseminate information to the media/public during an emergency. The principal or designee (with the coordination/assistance of the Administration Office) will issue all internal and external communications, prepare news releases, and brief the media as appropriate.

B. External Warning Systems

WCCS has established procedures for the dissemination of warnings to parents and other critical parties at the onset of an emergency so that appropriate protective or emergency response actions can be taken.

C. External Notice for Treatment of Injury

The school nurse has the responsibility to notify the parent or guardian of any medical treatment or serious injury. In the case of multiple injuries, where the nurse's first priority is assistance to the students, the principal shall notify or delegate the notification responsibility to another staff.

D. Functional Annexes

Functional annexes provide standard language and procedures and are intended to be transferable to schools statewide and modifications are not recommended.

- Shelter-in-Place
- Hold-in-Place
- Evacuation (required per 8 NYCRR Section 155.17 (e)(2)(i))
- On-site
- Off-site
- Secure Lockout
- Lockdown

NY STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TERMS

Effective 7/1/25, schools must use the emergency terms on this card. (8 NYCRR §155.17)

SCHOOL NAME: Westminster CCS

911 ADDRESS: 24 Westminster Ave, Bflo, 14215



SHELTER-IN-PLACE/SHELTER

SHELTER STUDENTS AND STAFF INSIDE THE BUILDING BECAUSE IT IS SAFER INSIDE THE BUILDING THAN OUTSIDE.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- Listen for instructions.
- Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible.
- Take attendance.
- Staff assist students as needed.
- Move away from windows if situation warrants.
- If instructed, move out of classroom to designated safe area; take attendance upon arrival at the new location.
- Stay together at all times.
- Listen for updates.



HOLD-IN-PLACE/HOLD

RESTRICT MOVEMENT OF STUDENTS AND STAFF WITHIN THE BUILDING WHILE DEALING WITH SHORT-TERM EMERGENCIES.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- Listen for instructions.
- Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible.
- Take attendance.
- Staff assist students as needed.
- Listen for updates.



EVACUATE

EVACUATE STUDENTS AND STAFF FROM THE BUILDING.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- Listen for instructions.
- Lead students to designated assembly area. Use secondary route, if necessary.
- Students in hallways should evacuate through the nearest exit.
- Bring attendance list and class roster.
- Close the classroom door after exiting.
- Take attendance when safe to do so.
- If evacuating off site, take attendance before moving from and upon arrival at off-site location.
- Listen for updates.



SECURE LOCKOUT

STUDENTS AND STAFF REMAIN INSIDE LOCKED SCHOOL BUILDINGS DURING INCIDENTS THAT POSE AN IMMINENT CONCERN OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- Listen for instructions.
- Lock all exterior doors and windows.
- Follow school procedure for blinds/lights.
- Take attendance.
- Classroom instruction continues as normal.
- All outdoor activities are terminated.
- Listen for updates.



LOCKDOWN

SECURE STUDENTS AND STAFF INSIDE LOCKED CLASSROOMS DURING INCIDENTS THAT POSE AN IMMEDIATE THREAT OF VIOLENCE IN OR AROUND THE SCHOOL.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

- LOCKDOWN announced - move quickly.
- If safe, gather students from hallways and common areas near your classroom.
- Lock the door. Barricade if necessary.
- Move students to a safe area in the classroom out of sight of the door.
- Follow school procedure for windows/blinds/lights.
- Keep everyone quiet. Silence cell phones.
- Take attendance, if possible.
- Do not communicate through door or answer room phone.
- Only respond to P.A. or alarms when there is an immediate life safety hazard based on observed conditions (smoke, fire, heat).
- Stay hidden until physically released by law enforcement personnel.

Shelter-in-Place Used to shelter students and staff inside the building.	Hold-in-Place Used to limit movement of students and staff while dealing with short term emergencies	Evacuate Used to evacuate students and staff from the building	Secure Lockout Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an imminent concern outside of the school.	Lockdown Used to secure school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school.
Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions. Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible. Classroom teachers, take attendance. All other staff assist students, as needed. • Move away from windows if situation warrants. If instructed, move out of classroom to designated safe area. Stay together at all times. • Take Attendance. • Listen for updates.	Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions. Students in hallways should return to assigned classroom, if possible. Classroom teachers, take attendance. All other staff assist students, as needed. • Listen for updates.	Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions. • Lead students to designated assembly or announced assembly areas. Use secondary route, if necessary. Bring attendance list and class roster. Close the classroom door after exiting Take attendance when safe to do so. If evacuating off site, take attendance before moving from and upon arrival at off-site location. • Listen for updates.	Listen for instructions about the situation and your actions. • Lock all exterior windows. Leave blinds/lights as they are. • Take Attendance. After initial instructions listen for updates. Classroom instruction continues as normal. All outdoor activities are terminated. • Listen for updates.	When you hear lockdown announced, you should move quickly to execute the following actions. In safe, gather students from hallways and common areas near your classroom. • Lock your door. Barricade if necessary. Move students to a safe area in the classroom out of sight of the door. Leave windows, blinds/lights as they are. • Keep everyone quiet, silence cell phones. • Take attendance, if possible. Do not communicate through door or answer room phone. • Do not respond to P.A. announcements or fire alarm. Stay hidden until physical released by law enforcement personnel.

If it is necessary to evacuate the building in the event of a fire, explosion, some toxic chemical releases, earthquakes, some violent acts or when ordered by law enforcement officers because of dangerous activity in the area. The school may utilize “On-Site Evacuation” or “Off-Site Evacuation”. When an “**On-Site Evacuation**” is required, building occupants will be notified. On-Site Evacuation routes are posted in all classrooms.

6. Community Impact

A. Off-Site Evacuation:

In some situations, building occupants will be required to evacuate to a location off school grounds to ensure their safety, an “**Off-Site Evacuation**”. The off-site evacuation plan has pre-designated off-site shelter locations:

The Primary Shelter site is Hermon Karen Baptist Church, 10 Hastings Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14215; (716) 816-9367

The Alternate Shelter site is Buffalo Public School # 80 Highgate Heights Elementary 600 Highgate Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14215 (716) 816-4050

B. Early Dismissal and School Cancellation Procedures:

Details available in the Building-Level Safety Plan.

C. Portable Emergency Kits:

WCCS is equipped with the emergency kits, details available in the Building-Level Safety Plan.

D. Emergency Equipment and Emergency:

Details available in the Building-Level Safety Plan.

E. Community Resources:

Details available in the Building-Level Safety Plan.

F. Procedures to Coordinate Use of Resources:

- The Chain of Command (Appendix 1) lists the WCCS staff with their title and phone number. Appendix 2 lists the WCCS Safety Team and their assigned responsibility, along with staff that have special skills such as CPR, triage, first aid, shelter management, search, and rescue, etc. The Person in charge, the principal, authorizes the use of emergency resources. The principal surveys the staff at the beginning of each school year to determine who has skills or training to play a vital role in an emergency.
- Parent(s)/Guardian Communication: Utilize telephone lists or television and radio media to notify parents and spouses of an emergency involving the students at the school building.
- Parent(s)/Guardian Reunification: The Building level safety plan contains family reunification guidelines.
 - Preserving Crime Scene Security: Any incident or event that appears to have criminal involvement must be handled in an extremely careful manner. Procedures have been established to secure and restrict access to the crime scene to preserve evidence from being disturbed or destroyed.

7. Situational Responses

A. Hazard Identification:

The District has established procedures in the Building-Level Safety Plans for the identification of internal and/or external hazards that may be present at the school site. These procedures are developed in coordination with the local Emergency Management Office, Fire Department, and law enforcement agencies, and the use of a Risk Probability Checklist.

Plans are in place, and detailed in the separate Building Level Response Plan document, for:

- Natural disasters
- Human caused disasters
- Acts or threats of Violence
- Medical Emergencies
- Control of Contagious Diseases and Pandemic Response
- Facility disasters

8. Emergency Recovery

Threats or actual violent incidents or other emergencies can have a major effect on the well-being of students, staff, and the community at large.

A. Post-incident Response Team and Plan

After all incidents and drills, available members of the Safety Team will meet to debrief. After any emergency that has resulted in the serious injury, death or emotional trauma of a student or staff member, the entire staff will be involved in the post trauma counseling. The principal, school counselor, social worker and nurse will coordinate the efforts.

B. Restoration and Review

Guidelines are listed in the Building-Level Safety Plan.

C. Mental Health Services

For critical situations that require the utilization of community mental health resources, the principal or designee is responsible for contacting the appropriate county mental health agency for assistance, guidance and trained personnel as needed.

Other agencies that may be contacted include but are not limited to:

United Way	716-887-2626
Belmont	716-884-7791
Catholic Charities	716-281-1400
Red Cross	716-886-7500
Salvation Army	716-883-9800
Feedmore WNY	716-852-1305
Crisis Services	716-834-3131
Erie County Family Health Services	716-891-2006
City of Buffalo Youth Services	716-851-5177
City of Buffalo Substance Abuse Counseling Clinic	716-886-2137
National Center for Victims of Crime	1-800-394-2255
Erie County Dept. of Social Services	716-858-6478
New York State Dept. of Social Services	1-800-342-3715
Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition	716-810-1038

9. Pandemic Response Plan

Consistent with the provisions of section 27-c of the Labor Law, WCCS has developed the following plan regarding protocols for responding to a declared state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease. These plans are reviewed and revised no less than quarterly to ensure all processes can be executed and all Department of Health guidance is followed.

Upon a declared state of emergency, a meeting of the Safety Committee will commence to address emergency preparations. The plans will include (1) communication with faculty, staff, and the community; (2) necessary steps needed to ensure the continuation of learning whether in-person, hybrid, or remote; (3) a plan for the nutritional and social wellness of our students; and (4) proper protocols to ensure that cleaning and disinfecting plans are in place to maintain the health and safety of the school community. Communication will be sent to all faculty, staff, parents, guardians, and families through multiple methods (email, telephone calls, texts, social media, news media, website postings, robo calls, traditional mail). Whenever possible, communication will be sent in each family's home language.

Communication will include, but is not limited to:

- Resources available to assist with basic needs including meals provided by the school and process for distribution
- Instructional, technological, and wellness services provided by the school and counseling team
- Information on modality of instruction including resource guides for remote or hybrid instruction
- Process for dissemination of technology equipment (Chromebooks) and hotspots
- Disinfecting and sanitization protocol to return to face-to-face instruction as quickly as possible and necessary school protocols when reopening occurs.

Through the utilization of the 2020-2021 Reopening Plan, plans for the cleaning and sanitization of the building, as well as shut down procedures will be executed, if necessary. In collaboration with the Business Office, a plan for employees and contractors who are experiencing symptoms, have been exposed to communicable disease, and/or have tested positive will be put into place. All efforts will be made to prevent the spread or contraction of disease at the school.

The following positions are considered essential to the operations of the school: Principal, Assistant Principals, Coordinator of Special Education, Facilities Engineer, Evening Custodial Staff, Technology Coordinator, and Cafeteria Staff. In the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce, all non-essential employees and contractors may telecommute based on the following practices: All staff have an assigned computer device and access to instructional duties. Google will be the primary tool for document and resource sharing among staff members. Google Classroom will be utilized to provide instruction. All students are issued a device at the beginning of the school year for supplemental instruction. Hot spots are available to students who do not have reliable internet from home.

Administrators, the technology coordinator, and cafeteria staff will oversee the distribution of additional technology resources, food, and supplies to students and staff as needed.

Based on the guidelines provided by the Department of Health, as well as the Reopening Plan, policies and procedures are in place to identify members who will determine the ability for the school to reopen, following New York State guidelines. Based on the recommendations from the Department of Health, proper PPE will be purchased in large quantities, provided to all essential personnel, and stored centrally for ease of access. Inventory will be monitored to ensure proper supply is available. Upon reopening, PPE will be available for all students,

visitors, and staff if not provided by each individual person. Training will be provided to students, staff, and visitors on how to properly wear and dispose of any PPE.

Access to the school will be restricted to essential visitors to mitigate additional risk as it pertains to any communicable disease. In the event contact tracing needs to be documented, individuals will be required to complete a health questionnaire prior to entering the building. WCCS will work with the Department of Health and any other required bodies to report positive cases.

WCCS and the Business Office will follow any federal, state, or local guidelines for appropriate leave options for testing, treatment, isolation, and quarantine of employees. Should emergency housing be requested by an essential employee, the Business Office will assist with the assessment of need and provide resources, where necessary.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: District Safety Team Roster for 2025-2026

District Safety Team Roster for 2025-2026		
Teresa Gerchman	School Administration	1/10/2022
Corey Wilson	School Administration	9/22/2021
Janice Nelson	School Office Clerk	9/30/2019
Julia Medley	Health Clinic	8/24/2022
Joseph Fabiano	School Counselor	4/28/2022
Brianna Pumputis	School Social Worker	7/27/2023
Brian Macey	School Administration	7/14/2022
Victoria Meister	Safety Officer	7/17/2025
Kelsey Barrett	Safety Officer	7/17/2025
Shawn O'Mara	Engineer	6/1/2014
Captain Aaron Young	Buffalo Police Department	6/1/2014
Abbey Staebell	Safety Officer	9/5/2023
Keith Panek	Safety Officer	9/5/2023
Brittney Higgs	YWCA Program Director	7/17/2025

Appendix 2: Building Safety Team Roster for 2025-2026

Building Safety Team Roster for 2025-2026		
Name	Representing (i.e., school administration, teachers, parent organization, law enforcement)	Date Assigned
Teresa Gerchman	School Administration	1/10/2022
Corey Wilson	School Administration	9/22/2021
Janice Nelson	Principal's Assistant	9/30/2019
Julia Medley	Health Clinic	7/14/2022
Joseph Fabiano	School Counselor	4/28/2022
Brianna Pumputis	School Social Worker	7/27/2023
Brain Macey	School Administration	7/14/2022
Dawn Roberts	Safety Officer	7/17/2025
Lesle Berkman	Safety Officer	7/17/2025
Abbey Staebell	Safety Officer	3/8/2023
Jessica Freitag	Safety Officer	7/17/2025
Heather Stotz	Safety Officer	7/11/2024
Brittney Higgs	YWCA Program Director	7/17/2025

Appendix 3: Description of prevention and intervention strategies Description of prevention and intervention strategies (as referenced in section 2.1):

Restorative Practices: Restorative Practices are used daily in all classrooms K-8. Restorative Justice emphasizes strong relationships and builds strong, positive communities. When there is a breakdown in those relationships, restorative practices offer processes that encourage accountability to repair harm. Students work to repair relationships after incidents with support from our restorative justice practice team. Teachers receive information through in-service training conducted by Erie County Restorative Coalition.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports PBIS: Currently, PBIS is available and implemented for students in grades K-8. Students are encouraged and rewarded for clearly identified positive behaviors through incentives. There are clearly established expectations (Respect, Responsibility, Safe) and rewards/incentives for individual classrooms and the school as a whole.

After School Program: The After-School Program is an extended day program operating after the school day Monday through Thursday for up to 150 students through YWCA 21st Century grant. During this time, additional academic instruction is provided in addition to other extra-curricular activities such as clubs, Drama, Band, Chorus, Sports, etc. Information and applications for this program are mailed to all parents.

Uniform Policy: WCCS has a mandatory uniform policy that eliminates competition with respect to clothing and fosters pride inside and outside of the school.

Wellness Program: WCCS has established a Wellness Committee and Program that addresses issues such as healthy breakfast and lunch menus, increased physical activity and healthy habits. This initiative supports a positive self-image and respect for others.

Buffalo Police Department Programs: The Buffalo Police Department provides Community Police Officers on a consultation basis as the need arises.

Bullying Awareness: Bullying is addressed in the day-to-day interactions between students and through the classroom activities, particularly in the Morning Meeting period in the schedule. The School Counselors provide personal counseling to students and their parents. Teachers receive information through in-service training conducted by the School Counselors and referring to related links on the WCCS website.

Counseling Services: The School Counselors and the Social Workers provide direct student counseling services, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and student safety advocacy and parent education programs. When necessary, outside counseling agencies are contacted to provide additional counseling services.

Social Emotional Learning/Mental Health: Weekly SEL lessons will be taught by certified staff to all students in order to give them the skills that empower them to navigate the complex and rapidly changing realities of our world. Students needing additional support are identified through DESSA for intensified support through individual or group counseling.

Threat Assessment Practices: A threat assessment team has been established and is composed of administrators, school counselors and the school social worker. An assessment of any perceived threat may be conducted by this team. When necessary, outside agencies are contacted to provide additional support and services.

Workplace Violence Prevention Program: All reported incidents of workplace violence are reviewed and assessed to mitigate potential risk factors.

Individualized Student Safety Plans: For students who have individualized safety needs, such as

those with medical conditions, a history of elopement, etc., plans are created with input from the SEL team, classroom teachers and family.

Appendix 4: Memorandum of Understanding with Vista Security Group

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding is made and entered into this 22nd day of August 2022 by and among Westminster Community Charter School (“the District”) and the School’s Resource Officers, who are employees of Vista Security Group, Inc.

WHEREAS, recent amendments to Education Law Section 2801-a and the Commissioner of Education’s Regulations require school districts that employ security personnel to have an agreement developed with stakeholder input defining the relationship among the District, school personnel, students, visitors, law enforcement and security personnel; defining the security personnel’s roles, responsibilities and involvement within the school district; and delegating the role of school discipline to school administration; and

WHEREAS, Education Law Section 2801-a requires that this agreement be incorporated into and published as part of the District -Wide Safety Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

1. This Memorandum was prepared with stakeholder input in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.
2. The responsibility for school discipline rests solely with the Westminster Community Charter School Board of Trustees, building administration, as well as teachers and other non-security staff, as set forth herein.
3. The Westminster Community Charter School Board of Trustees, President of Schools, building principals, assistant principals, and other non-security staff members (*e.g.*, teachers), as appropriate under the circumstances, are primarily responsible for addressing and responding to student, staff and visitor misconduct in a manner that is consistent with the School’s Code of Conduct and applicable law. When necessary, the School Resource Officers will assist non-security staff members with escorting individuals to a different location on or off school property and contacting local law enforcement.
4. At no time will the School Resource Officers be responsible for imposing school discipline or disciplining students in response to misconduct violating the School’s Code of Conduct. Rather, the School Resource Officers will instead refer suspected incidents of student misconduct to the appropriate school building administrator (*e.g.*, a principal or assistant principal), School Administration (*e.g.*, the School’s President) or other non-security staff member (*e.g.*, a teacher) as appropriate under the circumstances.

5. In addition, in accordance with their job description, School Resource Officers have the following illustrative responsibilities and duties:

- a. Patrolling and protecting the school building and grounds and ensuring doors, windows and gates are properly secured.
- b. Timely responding to emergencies that might threaten School property or threaten the health, welfare or safety of the District's students, staff, or visitors, and contracting local law enforcement when appropriate.
- c. Employing basic rules of good conduct on school grounds and buildings.
- d. Having knowledge of buildings and grounds.
- e. Working independently based upon established rules and procedures.
- f. Patrolling grounds and buildings and looking for signs of unusual occurrences.
- g. Guarding entrances or other specific areas to prevent unauthorized persons and vehicles from entering premises.
- h. Making security checks of entrances, gates, windows, doors, and lights.
- i. Observing and reporting disturbances or suspicious activities.
- j. Submitting reports or log data regarding activities including thefts, entries, vandalism or observations within the building that would threaten the safety and well being of staff and students.

6. Local law enforcement is not responsible for imposing school discipline or disciplining students in response to misconduct violating the School's Code of Conduct. The role of local law enforcement is to respond to criminal matters and matters that threaten the health, welfare or safety of School students, staff, or visitors.

7. This Memorandum will not be interpreted as constituting a contract or binding agreement of any type. Instead, this Memorandum merely describes certain roles and responsibilities of the School Resource Officers, other School staff members and local law enforcement regarding school discipline and security.

8. This Memorandum may be executed in one or more counterparts, all of which will be considered one and the same document. This Memorandum may be executed by facsimile or PDF signature, each of which will constitute an original for all purposes.

Each School Resource Officer will sign an individual MOU, which will be kept on file in the Westminster Community Charter School Central Office.

WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

VISTA SECURITY GROUP, INC.

By: Laura Ferrino
Laura Ferrino
Chief Operating Officer, Westminster Community Charter School

By: Jerry Rinaldo
Name: Jerry Rinaldo
Vista Security Group ~~Guard~~ Partner

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Laura Ferrino
Chief Operating Officer, Westminster Community Charter School

By: 
Name: Timothy C. LaFollette
Vista Security Group Guard

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Laura Ferrino
Chief Operating Officer, Westminster Community Charter School

By: Lodina Ch. Burn
Name: Lodina Ch. Burn
Vista Security Group Guard

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By: Paul Glinzki
Name: PAUL GLINSKI
Vista Security Group Guard

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