

School Safety Audit Checklist

Based on work done by Virginia State Education Department and modified by the New York State Police as a resource for school personnel.

Components of the Audit Process

School safety is the responsibility of everyone – staff, students, parents, and the community. An audit is one tool that, if used effectively, can provide a snapshot of the school's level of safety and identify those areas that need improvement. This proactive process will help ensure that students can maximize their learning potential within a safe and secure environment.

School safety encompasses multiple domains within the school environment that must be reviewed altogether when assessing the level of safety for students and staff. The ten minimum components of the audit process that should be assessed are:

1. Development and Enforcement of Policies
2. Procedures for Data Collection
3. Development of Intervention and Prevention Plans
4. Level of Staff Development
5. Opportunities for Student involvement
6. Level of Parent and Community Involvement
7. Role of Law Enforcement
8. Standards for Safety and Security Personnel
9. Safety and Security of Buildings and Grounds
10. Development of Emergency Response Plans

How often should a safety audit be conducted? A complete safety audit should be conducted every three years. A review of the identified implementation and improvements noted in the complete audit should be conducted on an annual basis.

Audit Procedure Preparation and Planning

It is recommended that a team be established to conduct the school safety audit. Each team should be comprised of at least three to five people representing a variety of stakeholders. These should include, but not be limited to, the central office administration, teachers, parents, and law enforcement personnel. To ensure neutrality and objectivity, it is suggested, when applicable, that team members should not audit their own facility. For example, the audit team in School A should audit School B, and vice-versa. Audits may also be conducted by qualified, private organizations outside the school system. Audit Team members should review the following documents and materials, preferably in advance of the on-site visit:

1. Student / Staff Code of Conduct
2. Data on Student Discipline Referrals
3. Criminal Data (reported by the school and by the surrounding community)
4. Blueprint of the school
5. Crisis Management Plan
6. Overview of the SAVE Legislation
7. New York State Department of Education Homeland Security System for Schools

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST

SCHOOL EXTERIOR AND PLAY AREAS	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. School grounds are fenced.				
a. What kind				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, approximate height 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one clearly marked and designated entrance for visitors 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs are posted for visitors to report to main office through a designated entrance. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted areas are clearly marked 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrubs and foliage are trimmed to allow for good line of sight. (3'-0"/8'-0" rule) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All poisonous shrubs, trees, and foliage have been removed. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrubs near building have been trimmed "up" to allow view of bottom of building 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus loading and drop-off zones are clearly defined. 				

• Access to bus loading area is restricted to other vehicles during loading/unloading.				
• Staff is assigned to bus loading/drop off areas.				
• There is a schedule for maintenance of:				
a. Outside lights				
b. Locks/Hardware				
c. Storage Sheds				
d. Windows				
e. Other exterior buildings				

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST				
SCHOOL EXTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. Parent drop-off and pick-up area is clearly defined.				
• There is adequate lighting around the building.				
• Lighting is provided at entrances and other points of possible intrusion.				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school ground is free from trash or debris. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is free of graffiti. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play areas are fenced. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground equipment has tamper-proof fasteners 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual surveillance of bicycle racks is possible. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual surveillance of parking lots from main office is possible 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot is lighted properly and all lights are functioning 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible lenses are protected by some unbreakable material 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All areas of school buildings and grounds are accessible to patrolling security vehicles. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driver education vehicles are secure. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students/Staff are issued parking stickers for assigned parking areas 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student access to parking area is restricted to arrival and dismissal times. 				

• Staff and visitor parking has been designated				
• Outside hardware has been removed from all doors except at points of entry.				
• Ground floor windows:				
a. no broken panes,				
b. locking hardware in working order				

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST				
SCHOOL EXTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
• Basement windows are protected with grill or well cover.				
• Doors are locked when classrooms are vacant.				
• High-risk areas are protected by high security locks and an alarm system				
a. Main office				
b. Cafeteria				
c. Computer Labs				

d. Industrial Arts rooms				
e. Science labs				
f. Nurses Office				
g. Boiler Room				
h. Electrical Rooms				
i. Phone line access closet				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unused areas of the school can be closed off during after school activities. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is two-way communication between the main office and: 				
a. Classroom				
b. Duty stations				
c. Re-locatable classrooms				
d. Staff and faculty outside building				
e. Buses				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are restricted from loitering in corridors, hallways, and restrooms. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Restricted" areas are properly identified. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are written regulations restricting student access to school grounds 				

and buildings.				
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SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST				
SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. There is a central alarm system in the school. If yes, briefly describe:				
• The main entrance is visible from the main office.				
• There is only one clearly marked and designated entrance for visitors.				
• Multiple entries to the building are controlled and supervised.				
• Administrative staff maintain a highly visible profile				
• Signage directing visitors to the main office are clearly posted				
• Visitors are required to sign in.				
• Visitors are issued I.D. cards or badges.				
• Proper identification is required of vendors, repairmen.				
• All staff - Full and part-time staff are issued ID cards that is worn in a manner that is visible				

• The following areas are properly lighted:				
a. Hallways				
b. Bathrooms				
c. Stairwells				
• Hallways and Bathrooms are supervised by staff.				
• The bathroom walls are free of graffiti.				
• Doors accessing internal courtyards are securely locked from the inside				
• Exit signs are clearly visible and pointing in the correct direction.				
• Switches and controls are properly located and protected.				
• Access to electrical panels is restricted.				
• The possibility of lower energy consumption and high lighting levels with more efficient light sources has been explored.				
• Directional lights are aimed at the building.				
SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST				
SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School files and records are maintained in locked, vandal proof, fireproof containers or vaults. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school maintains a record of all maintenance on doors, windows, lockers, or other areas of he school. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a classroom is vacant, students are restricted from entering the room alone. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friends, relatives or non-custodial parents are required to have written permission to pick up a student from school. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are required to have written permission to leave school during school hours. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full and part-time staff including bus drivers are issued I.D. cards or other identification. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are written regulations regarding access and control of school personnel using the building after school hours. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members who remain after school hours are required to sign out. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty members are required to lock classrooms upon leaving. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One person is designated to perform the following security checks at the end of day: 				

a. That all classrooms and offices are locked				
b. All restrooms are empty				
c. All locker rooms are empty				
d. Check all exterior entrances are locked				
e. Check all night lights are working				
f. Check the alarm system				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The telephone numbers of the principal or other designated contact person are provided to the police department so the police can make contact in the event of a suspicious or emergency situation. 				

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST

SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law enforcement personnel and/or community residents monitor school grounds after school hours. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All school equipment is permanently marked with an Identification Number. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An up-to-date inventory is maintained for all expendable school supplies. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure storage is available for valuable items 				
a. During school hours				

b. After school				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a policy for handling cash received at the school. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is regular maintenance and/or testing of the entire security alarm system at least every six months. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are classrooms numbered with reflective material: 				
a. Over door				
b. On bottom of door				
c. On exterior window				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has consideration been given to replacing interior doors with large windows to doors with small windows 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has consideration been given to replacing present classroom locks with locks that can be activated from the inside 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the P.A. system work properly 				
a. Can it be accessed from several areas in the school				
b. Can it be heard, and understood, outside				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has consideration been given to establishing a greeters window inside first set of exterior doors 				

• Are convex mirrors used to see around corners in hallways				
• Are convex mirrors used to see up and down stairwells				
SCHOOL INTERIOR	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
• Do all exterior doors have signs requiring visitors to report to the main office to sign in and obtain I.D.				
• Has consideration been given to installing Proximity Readers on certain exterior doors				
• Has consideration been given to installing strobe lights or flashing lights on exterior of building to warn staff and students outside of problems				
• How do you communicate during emergencies				
a. Two way radios				
b. Cell phones				
c. Pagers				
d. Other				
• Who is issued two way radios				
a. Administrators				
b. Custodians				

c. Members of the Emergency Response Team				
d. Other				
• There is a control system in place to monitor keys and duplicates.				
• Exterior light fixtures are securely mounted.				
• Mechanical rooms and hazardous storage areas are locked.				
• Fire drills are conducted as required by New York Education Law				
• A record of health permits is maintained.				
• A record of Fire Inspection by the local or state Fire Officer is maintained.				

DEVELOPMENT / ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. The Student Conduct Policy is reviewed and updated annually.				
• A visitor policy is in effect, requiring a sign-in procedure for all visitors, including visible identification.				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has a Crisis Management Plan in effect that is reviewed and updated annually. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Incident Command System is an integral part of the Safety Plan. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A chain-of-command has been established for the school when the principal and/or other administrators are away from the building. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has implemented pro-active security measures on campus, at school-sponsored activities, and on all school property (i.e., school buses). 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disciplinary consequences for infractions to the Code of Conduct are fairly and consistently enforced. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are an integral part of student discipline procedures and actions. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternatives to suspensions and expulsions have been built into the discipline policy and are consistently used. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral expectations and consequences for violations are clearly outlined in the Code of Conduct, including sanctions for weapon and drug offenses and all other criminal acts. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are an integral part of the schools safety planning and policy making. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are an integral part of students discipline procedures and actions. 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy provides a system(s) whereby staff and students may report problems or incidents anonymously. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific policies and/or procedures are in place that detail staff members' responsibilities for monitoring and supervising students outside the classroom, such as in hallways, cafeteria, rest rooms, etc. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has implemented a pro-active policy regarding parental actions during sporting events. 				

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. All Violations of state and federal law are reported to law enforcement.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An incident reporting procedure for disruptive and violent students has been established in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records or data have been established and are analyzed to identify recurring problems. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accident reports are filed when a student is injured on school property or during school-related activities. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incident reporting system is reviewed and updated annually. 				

INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PLANS	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. Students have access to conflict resolution programs.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are assisted in developing anger management skills. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity awareness is emphasized. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs are available for students who are academically at-risk. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students may seek help without the loss of confidentiality. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and parents are aware of community resources. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character education is taught as part of the curriculum in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements. 				

STAFF DEVELOPMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. Administrators and staff (including security and law enforcement personnel) are trained in conflict resolution methods.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators and staff (including security and law enforcement personnel) are trained in implementation of the Crisis Management Plan. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators and staff are trained in personal safety. 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School security officers (NOT law enforcement) receive in-service training for their responsibilities. 				
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Resource Officers (law enforcement) receive in-service training for their responsibilities. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School volunteers receive training to perform their duties. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and staff are made aware of their legal responsibilities for the enforcement of safety rules, policies, and state and federal laws. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School safety and violence prevention information is regularly provided as part staff development plan in accordance with the SAVE Legislation requirements 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff development opportunities extend to support staff, including cafeteria workers, custodial staff, secretarial staff, and bus drivers. 				

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. Students are represented on the School Safety Team.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school provides opportunities for student leadership related to violence prevention and safety issues. 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school provides adequate recognition opportunities for all students. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are adequately instructed in their responsibility to avoid becoming victims of violence (i.e., by avoiding high-risk situations, etc.). 				

LEVEL OF PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. The community supports the school's programs and activities that teach safety and non-violence.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School activities, services, and curricula reflect the characteristics of the students and the community. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School safety planning reflects the neighborhood, including crime and hazardous conditions. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are an integral part of the school's safety planning and policymaking. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are aware of behavioral expectations and are informed of changes in a timely manner. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local businesses and other community groups are involved in the school's safety planning. 				

ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. Incidents of crime that occur on school property or at school-related events are reported to law enforcement.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Enforcement is consulted on matters that may fall below the threshold of criminal activity. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement personnel are an integral part of the school's safety planning process. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has developed an effective partnership with local law enforcement. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school and local law enforcement have developed an agreement of understanding, defining the roles and responsibilities of both. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement personnel provide a visible presence on campus during school hours and at school-related events. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local law enforcement provides after hours patrols of the school site. 				

DEVELOPMENT OF A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. The school has a Crisis Management Plan.				
a. Reviewed on an annual basis				

b. Plan developed by the building safety team				
c. Team membership is in accordance with minimum requirements of the SAVE Legislation				
d. Meets minimum requirements of the SAVE Legislation				
2. The school has established a well-coordinated emergency plan with law enforcement and other crisis response agencies.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categories listed in the plan should include, but may not be limited to, the following: 				
a. Natural Disasters				
b. Accidents				
c. Acts of Violence				
d. Death				
e. Loss of power				
f. Fire				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following components of the Crisis Management Plan are practiced on a quarterly basis 				
a. Lockdown				
b. Lockout				
c. Shelter in place				

d. Evacuation of Building (can be done on a semi-annual basis)				

STANDARDS FOR SECURITY PERSONNEL	YES	NO	IMPLEMENT	IMPROVE
1. This school does employ security personnel.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment background checks are conducted for security personnel. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School security personnel meet a standard for training and qualifications as mandated by New York State. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security personnel have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security personnel are involved in the school's safe school planning process. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security personnel are knowledgeable about youth service providers, both in and out of the school. 				