DISTRICT WIDE EMERGENCY:

The District Office should handle any messaging if there is a District Wide Emergency. The District Office should also handle any messaging if there is any building that is in Lockdown or Evacuated, as the building administrator may not be able to do so.

The message in Blackboard ConnectEd should be sent in Emergency mode so that all contacts for each child and adult are utilized. During any emergency notification, all media should be utilized (text, phone, email) by including the text of the recorded phone call in the tab/field for emails (up to 30,000 characters permitted) and in the tab/field for (SMS) text messages (up to 300 characters permitted). In addition, the message should be sent to all families and in both English and Spanish (depending on the home language indicated in eSchoolPLUS).

The authority to create and send district wide messages is limited to a handful of employees with unique usernames and passwords. The district employee sending a district wide message would be the following in descending order depending upon availability and access:

1. Judy Diaz
2. Mitchell Combs
3. Or a designated individual using the username and password of one of the above
Message Templates

LOCKDOWN - INITIAL NOTIFICATION

This is a message from the Port Chester School District. In accordance with District emergency management protocols, _______ School has been placed in lockdown. The _______ Police department is on scene verifying the safety and security of all students and staff. Parents are urged not to contact the school or district office so phone lines may remain available for our staff to manage this process.

Please remember that our first priority is always the safety and security of our students and staff. We will continue to provide updates as soon as possible. Please be patient and understand we may be unable to respond as quickly and completely as you may like. There is no need for parents to respond to the school at this time. Please do not go to the school even if your children request you do so. We understand that this may be your first instinct as a parent, but your presence will interfere with the police and district’s response. The campus will be temporarily closed to all vehicular and pedestrian traffic until the lockdown is lifted. Thank you for your cooperation.

LOCKDOWN LIFTED - UPDATE

This is a message from the Port Chester School District. All students and staff have been released from lockdown at _______ School, and normal school activities have resumed. Students and staff did an exceptional job following district emergency management protocols. Again, all students and staff at _______ School are safe. There is no safety or security threat at the school. The campus has been reopened to pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and normal operations have resumed.

We appreciate your patience during this procedure, and thank you for your cooperation. Have a pleasant good morning/afternoon. Thank you.

EVACUATION - INITIAL NOTIFICATION

This is a message from the Port Chester School District regarding ______________ School. Let me first assure you that all students and staff are safe. At approximately ____ (time) ______ (nature of incident i.e. “A small fire was detected in an air handler located in the west wing of the building.”) In accordance with District emergency management protocols, the school was promptly evacuated, and all staff and students were moved to safety.

Police and fire departments are on the scene evaluating the situation, and working closely with District administration. The campus is temporarily closed to all vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and parents should not respond to the school. Parents are urged not to contact the school or district office so phone lines may remain available for our staff to manage this process. We will
provide detailed follow up communications shortly. We appreciate your patience and cooperation.

PARENT REUNIFICATION - SECONDARY LOCATION

This is a message from the Port Chester School District. An incident has occurred at _________ School necessitating the evacuation of the school. Students and staff are being relocated to ____________________. It will be necessary to reunify all students directly with parents at that location. Students will not be bussed home. I repeat, students will not be bussed home, and must be picked up by an authorized parent or guardian at ____________.

The District plans for parent reunification of _________ school at _______________ (secondary location,) and has detailed procedures in place to streamline the process. Students will only be released to authorized parents or guardians listed on the student’s emergency card. Please be sure to bring photo identification, which will be verified by district personnel.

Upon arrival at the school, district personnel will provide direction and assistance for parking and check-in. Following verification of identification, you will be reunified with your child. District personnel will be available to assist with the process.

Compliance and patience is critical in order for this process to move smoothly. Please do not park vehicles along roadways or in other non-designated locations as they create significant traffic issues, and will likely be removed promptly by police.

The reunion process will begin at ___:____. No campus access will be allowed prior to that time. Additional information is available on our website www.portchessterschools.org. We appreciate your patience and cooperation in completing this process smoothly. Thank You.

BOMB THREAT - INITIAL MESSAGE

This is a message from the Port Chester School District. XYZ School has been safely evacuated in response to a bomb threat that was received. All staff and students are safe and accounted for. Local law enforcement is assisting school administration at the location and conducting a preliminary investigation into the incident. No action is needed by parents and guardians and we request that you do not contact the school or respond to the campus. We are actively collaborating with police to verify the safety of the building so we may resume normal school operations.

We will provide additional updates, including when students and staff have returned to the building.

BOMB THREAT - POST INCIDENT
This is a message from the Port Chester School District. [Earlier this morning, a written threat was found in a bathroom of XYZ School.] Although a determination was made that the threat was not credible, a decision to evacuate was made in collaboration with the XYZ Police Department. This decision was made out of an abundance of caution and allowed law enforcement to conduct further inspection of the school. Law enforcement conducted a detailed security sweep of the building, which included the use of specially trained K-9's. Students were temporarily relocated to an off-site location in accordance with district emergency response procedures.

New York State mandates that specific information related to emergency response procedures be kept confidential for security reasons. Additional information is disseminated to inform parents immediately through the web page, social media, email, and via phone as necessary to manage emergencies. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation regarding this incident.

SAFETY ALERT TEMPLATES

[Ex.1] This is a message from the Port Chester School District. [Describe circumstances of student encounter with a stranger, e.g. This morning, one of our high school students was approached for a possible abduction attempt while on her way to school. Law enforcement was notified immediately and are involved in the case. The man is described as 30-40 years old, about six feet tall, with shoulder-length hair and a short beard, and was driving a blue van when he approached the student. If you see anyone matching this description, please contact law enforcement immediately and remind your children about safety rules in dealing with strangers. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

[Ex.2] This is an important message from the Port Chester Public Schools. We were recently informed of a social media video containing inappropriate images of minors. We took immediate action, contacted law enforcement, and began an investigation. Distributing or possessing inappropriate videos is a crime, and anyone doing so will face possible criminal charges. We would remind all parents to closely supervise their children's use of social media to ensure their privacy and safety. Thank you.

[Ex.3] This is an important message from the Port Chester Public Schools. We were recently informed of a disturbing social media post targeting students. We do not tolerate such behavior and took immediate action, contacted law enforcement, began an investigation, and shall take all legal means at our disposal not only to ensure the perpetrators are dealt with appropriately but that any victims are safe and their privacy protected. We appreciate all the students who stepped up to notify the administration of the post; your concern for fellow students is an excellent example of caring and responsible citizenship. We would remind all parents to closely supervise their children's use of social media to ensure their own privacy and safety.
SNOW DAY - EMERGENCY CLOSING

This is an important weather alert from Port Chester Public Schools. Due to expected inclement weather [hazardous weather conditions forecast by the National Weather Service] all schools will be closed and all activities are cancelled, today/tomorrow [Day, Month, Date]. Have a safe day.

ONE-HOUR DELAYED OPENING

This is an important weather alert from Port Chester Public Schools. Due to conditions caused by inclement weather, all Port Chester Public Schools will begin with a one-hour delay today, [Day, Month, Date]. [Pre-Kindergarten classes will be in-person as usual] Thank you, and please travel safely.

TWO-HOUR DELAYED OPENING

This is an important weather alert from Port Chester Public Schools. Due to conditions caused by inclement weather, all Port Chester Public Schools will begin with a two-hour delay today, [Day, Month, Date]. [Pre-Kindergarten classes will be in-person as usual] Thank you, and please travel safely.

INITIATING A REMOTE LEARNING DAY

This is an important weather alert from the Port Chester Public Schools. Tomorrow/Today, [Day, Month, Date], will be a full remote learning day for grades Kindergarten through 12 because of expected inclement weather conditions forecasted. [Pre-Kindergarten classes will be in-person as usual.] All after school activities and athletics are cancelled for the day. Students should log into their classes following a normal school day schedule. Thank you.

EARLY DISMISSAL

This is an important message from Port Chester Public Schools. Due to an impending storm forecast by the National Weather Service [or: Due to forecast inclement weather], Port Chester Public Schools will have an early dismissal today and all Port Chester students in grades Kindergarten through 12 will be dismissed at noon [or other time] today, [Day, Month, Date]. All after school activities are cancelled. Thank you, and please travel safely.
JUST CANCELLING ALL AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

This is an important message from Port Chester Public Schools. Due to inclement weather, all Port Chester Public School activities are cancelled today, [Day, Month, Date]. Thank you.

BUILDING LEVEL EMERGENCY:

If a school building is dealing with a Lockout, Shelter in Place, Hold in Place, or non-imminent threat, the Building Administrator or designee should send an initial templated message (see above examples to personalize to building and circumstances). (In the event that the administrator is unable to send a message, they should contact the District Office and communications should take place as above).

Note: During any emergency notification, all media should be utilized (text, phone, email) by including the text of the recorded phone call in the tab/field for emails (up to 30,000 characters permitted) and in the tab/field for (SMS) text messages (up to 300 characters permitted). A message describing the protocol that was initiated should be sent immediately and follow-up communications can then take place describing the (non-confidential) details of the incident. In addition, the message should be sent to all families in the school and in both English and Spanish (depending on the home language indicated in eSchoolPLUS).

BUILDING LEVEL NON-EMERGENCY (OUTREACH):

If a school building would like to send out a non-emergency message to the community, it must be authorized by the school building principal or designee before being sent.

Best Practices:

- The message in Blackboard ConnectEd should be sent in Emergency mode if the message needs to reach recipients in an urgent manner (see above).
- The message should be sent to all families and in both English and Spanish (depending on the home language indicated in eSchoolPLUS).
• All media should be utilized (text, phone, email) so that recipients get the message in multiple ways. Do this by including the text of the recorded phone call in the tab/field for emails (up to 30,000 characters permitted) and in the tab/field for (SMS) text messages (up to 300 characters permitted). Do this in both English and Spanish.
• Only two messages should be sent for non-emergency (outreach) calls per event, one about a week before the event and one a day prior to the event. Please limit the number of outreach messages to two per event unless permission for more is granted by the Superintendent or her/his designee.
• Keep the length of messages to below 90 seconds if possible.