

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MAYOR'S TASK FORCE COMPLETES REVISION OF DISTRICT WIDE CRISIS MANUAL**

In January of this year, following the tragic events of Newtown, CT, East Haven Mayor Joseph Maturo, Jr. created a task force of the leadership of the Town's Board of Education, Police and Fire Departments with the assignment to work together to review and revise the school districts' crisis manuals. At the time the Mayor was concerned that each school had a crisis manual that was independent of each other as to procedures, format and policies. The Mayor asked the committee to review all of the existing manuals and then standardize the crisis response preparedness, responsibilities and policies into a district wide crisis manual with additional appendices that would be school (site) specific for each of the town's places of learning.

Today Mayor Maturo is pleased to announce that the task force has completed its work and the manuals have not only received the approval of his office but also that of the Board of Education at a meeting held recently. Under the direction of Deputy Fire Chief Chuck Licata and Police Captain Joseph Slane along with Superintendent Anthony Serio and Assistant Superintendent Erika Forti, the team met with the principals of each school for critical input which led to the completed manual. While each school has an individual document, all the general aspects of the plan are common language and exactly the same for each location. These include crisis response preparedness measures; outside emergency contact information; crisis response kit; ongoing responsibilities; procedures for vulnerable areas; codes and evacuation procedures; lockdown procedures and communication to the parents.

In addition each manual has its own appendices with school specific information such as: floor plans; crisis team members; contact information and both a primary and secondary evacuation site. "The advantage of now having a "District Crisis Manual" will enable the administrators at each school to be familiar with the district's standardize policies and procedures regardless of what school they happen to be assigned during a crisis. The appropriate appendices in each document will then give all site specific information unique to each school for easy reference by our school staffs and emergency personnel to make our town better prepared to respond in a crisis. While this document may be completed at this time, school safety will always be a work in progress and these documents will be reviewed at least annually and more frequently whenever necessary. In addition it will require all principals to review the procedures with staff twice yearly; conduct practice drills with the staff and students also two times per year and to require teachers to review and practice emergency procedures with their individual classes also twice per year.", said Maturo.

"The changes to the plan are currently without any additional costs and also include teachers who are outside the building to have established radio communication with the office at all times, Mayor continued. While the plan will be in effect immediately, all school staffs will be reintroduced further trained in the plan again prior to the beginning of the next school year in August."

"I would like to commend Deputy Fire Chief Licata, Police Captain Slane and Superintendent Serio and his staff for working so diligently to revise this very important document in such an efficient period of time. Our commitment and diligence to keeping our students safe must never cease nor should we ever lose our focus in responding to the ever changing world we live in today. I hope our parents and residents recognize the dedication of the town's administration and our educational team to provide not only a safe environment for our children but one that would enhance their chances of future success", concluded Maturo.

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