**STARS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

**SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE SYSTEM (STARS)**

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN**

 **[ENTER CITY/TOWN] Police Department,**

**[ENTER CITY/TOWN] FIRE DEPARTMENT,**

**AND**

 **[ENTER CITY/TOWN] PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**I. General Principles
II. Fire, Police, and School Department Designated**

 **Representatives**

**III. Procedural Guidelines
IV. Coordination** & **Responsibility Protocol**

**A) Consultation (Non-Emergency)**

**B) Readiness (Increasing Concern)**

**C) Intervention (Emergency)**

**V. Implementation**

**A)  Training**

**B)  Effective Date and Duration of this**

 **Memorandum of Agreement**

**Memorandum of Agreement for the
School Threat Assessment and Response System (STARS)**

**I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

In order to ensure safe and secure school environments that are conducive to learning, the **[ENTER CITY/TOWN]** Police Chief, Fire Chief, and School Superintendent do hereby agree to coordinate their violence prevention, reduction, and, response efforts through the School Threat Assessment and Response System (STARS).

The intent of the STARS initiative is to prepare, assess, respond, and strive to prevent threats of violence in schools through a program that recognizes the uniqueness and integrity of each school facility by creating a comprehensive violence prevention and reduction strategy. STARS is a process to ensure professional, effective community violence prevention, assessment, and response in recognition and respect for the mission of each agency. The system is based on universally agreed upon procedures and guidelines that determine the need for additional assistance beyond an individual community's emergency response capabilities in terms of capacity and duration.

The participating Fire, Police, and School departments agree to address and respond effectively and cooperatively to threats of violence or any activity which could lead to potential acts of violence. This joint partnership focuses on activities that take place within school facilities, on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, and/or locations which have the potential to cause negative repercussions in maintaining a safe-school environment.

This Memorandum of Agreement is entered into pursuant to the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and local ordinances of the respective community regarding issues of violence, threats, and potential harm to students which would require:

1. A law enforcement and/or fire service response in a school setting;

2. A law enforcement and/or fire service response during any school-sponsored activity, even if the function is located off school grounds;

3. A law enforcement and/or fire service response in a community setting involving students of the corresponding public school; or

4. A law enforcement and/or fire service response in a community setting that has the potential to adversely affect student and school faculty safety.

**II. FIRE, POLICE, AND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES**

In order to facilitate timely and effective communication and interaction between the participating Fire, Police, and School Departments, each representative agency to identify an individual who will function as his/her designee when the signing party is not readily available.

**III. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

Through the STARS initiative, all participating agencies agree to work together to identify the causes of violence in schools, develop solutions and strategies across disciplines to address those causes identified, and institute changes that will result in measurable reduction in violence and increased safety and security in the school environment. STARS is based on each participating agency s cooperation, coordination, and a commitment to work proactively in their respective community to ensure a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, public safety officials, and members of their community. However, recent violent events across the country have proved that no community can totally prevent or anticipate violent acts at any level. Therefore, it is imperative that we all continue to work together to provide safe and secure learning environments in our schools.

**IV. COORDINATION & RESPONSIBILITY PROTOCOL**

In any situation that can cause or has the potential to cause harm or breach the safety of any student, school personnel, and/or school environment, decisions must be made quickly, definitively, and with the concern of all parties involved. Just as it can be Impossible to predict the occurrence of a violent incident or acute hazardous condition, it is impossible to predetermine the course of action to take for each given situation without knowing all the variables.

The Fire Chief, Police Chief, and the School Superintendent or their respective designees agree to address incidents and threats through response classifications involving varying degrees of consultation, readiness, and intervention.

A) Consultation (Non-Emergency):

Designated School Personnel contacts responsible Police and/or Fire Personnel with concern or knowledge of a situation that may or may not escalate or result in potential violence. This can include, but not be limited to: information sharing, hearsay, and requests for follow-up information and expertise.

Each party can share information, provide input, and make recommendations in an effort to reach a consensus on how best to respond to the situation.

B) Readiness, (Increasing Concern):

Designated School Personnel contacts responsible local Police and/or Fire Personnel with concern or knowledge of a one-time or ongoing situation that has potential to cause harm to any individuals or property, incite or provoke a greater degree of violence or concern. Readiness can include a situation where in most cases the mere presence of law enforcement and/or fire service personnel can de-escalate or settle a given situation.

Each party shares information, provides input, and makes recommendations. The ultimate decision-making authority regarding the breach of school rules will be determined by local School Officials. Police Officials will determine the consequences of any breach of law which threatens the safety of persons and property.

C) Intervention (Emergence):

Designated School Personnel contacts responsible local Police and/or Fire Personnel with emergency situation, a report of violence or a serious or imminent threat to the safety of students, faculty, administrative personnel, or school property.

School Personnel will provide pertinent information as to personnel and facilities. The ultimate decision-making authority concerning public safety related determinations will be made by the Police or Fire Chief or his/her designee in consultation with the School Superintendent or his/her designee.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING

Prior to the execution of this agreement the Fire Department, Police Department, and the Public School Department of each city or town shall provide training and information to respective staff, designated personnel, and community members to inform them of policy and procedure guidelines. This implementation and training shall be ongoing to reach any and all new staff and/or designees.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND DURATION OF THIS AGREEMENT

The provisions of this Memorandum of Agreement shall be effective as of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and will remain in effect in its entirety until amended or rescinded by any of the parties listed below.

NAME OF FIRE CHIEF OR DESIGNEE NAME OF FIRE DEPARTMENT

NAME OF POLICE CHIEF DESIGNEE NAME OF POLICE DEPARTMENT

NAME OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT OR DESIGNEE NAME OF SCHOOL DEPARTMENT