

Crisis Management Plans

In light of the recent tragedy which took place in Connecticut I have had a number of questions related to how our local schools are prepared for a crisis. I thought I would take a moment today to review the systems we have in place, which are designed assist us if the need arises. It is important to note that we are continuing to plan and make our schools as safe as possible within the financial means we have available.

Let me begin by letting you know that each school has an Emergency Response Plan in place and that we conduct two emergency lockdown drills per year. We are working with the local police department in reviewing our school plans and hope to partner with the department in conducting the previously mentioned drills. We are also attempting to have our school principals meet with Chief Wingert on a monthly basis to enhance communication between the schools and the police department. The department is very involved and supportive and we appreciate their ongoing efforts and guidance.

We also have an emergency communication system in place, which allows us to make contact with all parents in the District within a very short period of time. This "ConnectED" system allows us to simultaneously send out phone and email messages in case of an emergency. We use the system for a number of purposes currently, but its main reason for existence is to serve as a vehicle for emergency communication.

Over the past year we have installed video camera surveillance systems at certain schools. These cameras enable us to record activity at these schools both during the day and at night. Although this system does not allow us to prevent action from taking place, it does provide a video recording of all activity after the fact. As the budget permits we would like to add additional video coverage across the District.

We all know that senseless tragedies like the one which took place in Connecticut are hard to understand and even harder to prevent. This said, we will continue to do what we can within our financial means to protect the children of our community. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families in Connecticut and all of those who have been impacted by this act of violence.