



PARKLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

Educating For Success, Inspiring Excellence.

Administration Center

1210 Springhouse Rd., Allentown, PA 18104

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ParklandSchoolDistrict



@ParklandSchools



RICHARD SNISCAK
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September 4, 2018

Dear Parkland Parents/Guardians:

Parkland School District's top priority is to ensure that all students learn in a safe and secure school environment. The District has emergency operation plans that are updated annually and reviewed by our District's Crisis Management team and emergency first responders to ensure our readiness to respond to an emergency or crisis. Parkland School District will continue to work collaboratively with emergency first responders to implement the regulations enacted by the School Safety Act (House Bill 1142) of 2018.

Annually, our staff and students regularly practice monthly fire drills and one security drill that ranged from bus evacuation drills, weather emergency drills, and lockdown drills. Act 39 (House Bill 1448) of 2018 updated Section 1517 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code to require that a minimum of one of our monthly fire drills include a security-based drill. In the past, none were mandated, but Parkland Schools have conducted a minimum of one security-based drill in addition to the required monthly fire drills as part of our emergency operation plan.

During the week of August 28, 2018, **all Parkland School District staff** received training conducted by the Pennsylvania State Police on the *Run, Hide, Fight* protocol for active assailants who may enter a school. This option-based protocol focuses on decision making, situational awareness, and mitigating injury during an active assailant crisis. In addition to our State Police, the *Run, Hide, Fight* program has been endorsed and recommended by the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In spring 2018, the school district's administration met with representatives from our community's police, fire, and ambulance departments to review our monthly fire drill procedures. As a team, we decided to change our fire drill response to allow the staff in each building to "evaluate" before we "evacuate" when the fire alarm sounds.

Since childhood, most of us have been conditioned to immediately leave the school building when the fire alarm is heard. The unfortunate reality today is that we need to take proactive steps to ensure our school's population are not evacuating into a potentially dangerous setting. Classroom teachers discussed the new fire drill changes with their students as an extra layer of safety when the procedures were implemented in the spring. Of course, if any staff observes any signs of an active fire (fire, smoke, odor), the staff and students will immediately evacuate the building.

The goal of any protocol is to familiarize students and staff with procedures, so they will feel comfortable, safe, and secure in the event of a real emergency. We recognize that participating in such drills may heighten anxiety for some students, especially those new to the district or even new to a building. To lessen that concern, our staff will discuss the school security drills with students in an age-appropriate context. Please talk to your child about the importance of being prepared in the event of an emergency. Our aim is to help the students feel comfortable throughout the drill.

Keeping our students safe and secure is a community effort. We appreciate parent support in working with the school to this end. If you have any specific questions about our upcoming security drills, please feel free to contact your child's principal.

Thank you,



Richard T. Sniscak
Superintendent of Schools



Dr. Anthony M. Naradko
Parkland School District Safety &
Security Administrator