



September 13, 2024

Dear Manhasset School Community,

As we close out the week, I want to provide you with an update on our safety and security protocols.

First and foremost, I want to reassure you that no threats have been made against any of our schools. The recent lockout of our buildings resulted from a domestic disturbance within the community, unrelated to our schools.

Please know that the safety and well-being of our students and staff is our top priority, and we are committed to doing everything we can to create a safe and secure environment at all times.

As a parent myself, I understand how unsettling it can be to hear about safety concerns in the community. Unfortunately, misinformation and rumors have contributed to heightened concern about student safety. Today, Dr. Roder addressed the student body at the Secondary School to reassure them that our schools are secure and that no threats have been made. He also reminded students to be cautious about what they share through group text messages and social media, as spreading misinformation can inadvertently compromise the very safety we strive to maintain. Encouraging open communication, he emphasized the importance of reporting *any* safety concerns to a trusted adult, who will notify school officials.

We take *all* concerns seriously, and I urge you to have a similar conversation with your children to reinforce the unintended consequences of spreading rumors.

A cornerstone of our Districtwide Safety Plan is our strong partnership with the Nassau County Police Department and Homeland Security. Each agency supports our schools and has dedicated officers who collaborate with school officials regularly. These officers patrol our campuses, assist with safety drills, and provide real-time guidance during emergencies. Additionally, I serve on the Nassau County School Superintendent's Safety Committee, where I meet monthly with representatives from Homeland Security and the Police Commissioner's office to review and apply best practices in school safety.

In recent years, the Manhasset School District has taken significant steps to enhance the security of our schools while remaining deeply committed to the social, emotional, and physical well-being of our students.

Some of these measures include:

- Redesigned school entrances with security vestibules and video intercom systems.
- Installed bollards and railings to protect pedestrians near driveways.
- Increased security staffing across the District and provided them with training from Homeland Security.
- Regular sweeps by our security staff throughout the day to ensure that exterior doors are locked and our premises are secure.
- Ongoing upgrades to our camera and video system, which are monitored by staff.
- Equipped schools with swipe access cards that ensure our exterior doors can be automatically locked via our technology platform in the event of an emergency.
- Installed automatic lockdown buttons that can be pushed in the event of an emergency in each building.
- Provided key personnel with access to the RAVE emergency notification system, which ensures a swift response by bypassing 911 in the event of an emergency.
- Conduct regular security drills in partnership with the Nassau County Police Department, Homeland Security, and the Nassau BOCES school safety specialists.
- Prioritize students' social and emotional well-being through our wellness staff and partnership with Northwell Health.
- Assist families in crisis by connecting them with appropriate resources tailored to their specific needs.

I want to emphasize that nothing is more important than the safety of our students and staff. Each school has an Emergency Response Team that meets regularly to review and update its Building Level Emergency Response Plan, which is detailed and confidential. Our Districtwide Safety Team also meets regularly to review and refine the Districtwide Safety Plan. The Nassau County Police Department and our Health and Safety experts at Nassau BOCES work closely with us to ensure our emergency plans reflect the latest developments in school safety. The [Districtwide Safety Plan](#) is available on the District's website for your reference.

If your child is feeling unsettled or anxious by these recent events, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of the District's Wellness Team for assistance. We remain grateful for your ongoing partnership in maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gaurav Passi  
Superintendent of Schools