



Following the Oregon School Shooting: A Message About Safety in Our Schools

October 16, 2026

Dear POB Families and Community Members,

Please pardon the length of this message, as the importance of this topic warrants a thoughtful and thorough explanation.

Yesterday's school shooting at Silver Rail Elementary School in Bend, Oregon, where three young children and a teacher lost their lives, is heartbreaking. Our thoughts and condolences are with the families and the entire school community.

News of a school shooting naturally conjures up strong emotions, sadness, anger, and concern. As parents, you entrust us each day with your children.

I want to assure you that the safety and well-being of our students and staff remain our highest priorities. While no school can remove every threat, Plainview-Old Bethpage Schools has comprehensive safety and security measures, prevention strategies, and emergency response procedures designed to reduce risks and protect our school community.

Our approach to school safety extends well beyond physical security. Our school psychologists, social workers, counselors, faculty, and administrators play an essential role in identifying students who may be struggling, providing interventions, and addressing concerns before they escalate. These mental health and student support systems are important components of our comprehensive school safety planning.

Our District complies with New York State's school safety requirements, including the annual review, adoption, and timely submission of our safety plans. Each year, our District-Wide School Safety Plan is presented publicly at a Board of Education meeting, following an opportunity for community review and comment. Our building-specific emergency response plans, which contain detailed security and emergency procedures, remain confidential to protect the safety of our schools.

School safety is also an ongoing responsibility. Our District Health and Safety Committee meets monthly, bringing together principals, teachers, representatives of the Nassau County Police Department's Homeland Security, Plainview Fire Department and other District personnel. Led by our Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Safety, the committee regularly reviews safety practices, identifies concerns, and considers opportunities for improvement.

Equally important are the security procedures we follow every day. These include controlled visitor access, designated single points of entry, and double-door secured vestibules, often referred to as *mantraps*, which provide an additional layer of protection before visitors enter our schools.

School safety is a shared responsibility, and our everyday actions matter. We recognize that some of our procedures may be inconvenient, particularly when visiting our buildings. However, these measures are in place for a reason. We also rely on our community to speak up when something does not seem right. Several years ago, we established POBSAFE@pobschools.org as an easy way for students, families, staff, and community members to report suspicious activity, safety concerns, or potentially unsafe conditions.

Additionally, our [Say Something](#) reporting system is monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing another way to share concerns about someone's well-being, threatening behavior, or potential risks to our students, staff, or schools. We encourage everyone to use these resources and never hesitate to report something that raises concern. In an immediate emergency, always call 911.

The tragedy in Oregon is a sad reminder that school safety requires constant attention and community partnership. Our commitment is not simply to meet state requirements, but to continually evaluate our practices, strengthen our prevention efforts, and foster school environments where students feel safe, supported, and connected.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for improving safety and security throughout our District. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me directly at askthesupt@pobschools.org or call my office.

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our POB community safe.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mary O'Meara
Superintendent of Schools
(516) 434-3001