

December 17, 2012

Re: Security in CREC Schools

Dear CREC Families,

In the midst of such sadness, we are reminded of the great honor and responsibility CREC has in partnering with you in your child's education. Thank you for the trust and support you exhibit each day. As the details of the school tragedy in Newtown continue to unfold, we wish to reassure you that the safety and security of your child is our highest priority.

Please know that CREC has routine policies, procedures and personnel in place to ensure the highest degree of safety and security for students, staff and visitors. Each CREC school, and the district as a whole, maintains comprehensive emergency response plans that are practiced and reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year.

The list below details ways in which CREC approaches school security. We continually review our practices to make enhancements:

- School administrators, school nurses and safety chairs participate in Department of Homeland Security training.
- A district-wide security manager serves as a liaison to First Responders, assists school leadership in emergency situations, and routinely assesses locations to identify and address vulnerabilities.
- Uniformed Murphy Security guards and program personnel provide security services for all CREC Schools.
- All schools are equipped with an entry access control system; doors remain locked during school hours, requiring visitors to sign in and out of the school.
- Emergency Action Plans, which include detailed responses to a variety of emergency situations, are reviewed and updated annually.
- Annual "First Responder Meetings" are held at the opening of each school year. Representatives of the local police and fire departments, as well as EMT and town emergency management officials are invited to the school to meet with school staff and review emergency procedures.
- School-based safety teams continuously review safety measures and ensure that school personnel understand and follow established procedures.
- Crisis response teams, identified at the school and district level, are trained and prepared to respond with specific actions in the event of an emergency.
- Schools practice monthly fire drills and periodic lock-down or crisis drills, including a drill that combines simultaneous evacuation and lockdown.
- Each school has an identified off-campus evacuation site, in the event students must be removed from school grounds.
- CREC's Central Office conducts quarterly district-wide safety meetings, which include school safety chairs, the school nurse supervisor, the school security manager and other relevant professionals to share best practices and review current procedures.

In the coming days and weeks, some of our students may experience anxiety or express concerns. Our well-trained professionals are prepared to provide each child with the support he or she may need. Please note, that while individual support is available, CREC Schools are resuming normal schedules. Though difficult, the return to normalcy will help our students feel safe and secure. If you have any questions regarding available supports, I encourage you to contact your child's teacher or principal. Additionally, under the "For Parents" section of crecschools.org, you will find a list of resources to assist you in discussing and processing the tragedy with your family.

The CREC community is here to support your family. We appreciate the privilege of working in partnership with you to educate your child.

Sincerely,



Denise M. Gallucci
Deputy Executive Director
Superintendent of Schools