

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent of Schools



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The Education Center

January 7, 2013

Dear Fairfield Schools Community:

I am writing to inform you about some of the actions we are taking in the Fairfield Public Schools in the aftermath of the tragedy in Newtown. In some cases, these actions will cause some inconvenience to those wishing to enter our schools but we believe this inconvenience is outweighed by the increased security these measures bring to our schools. We are working closely with the Fairfield Police Department to improve security at our schools. We cannot share everything with you, as that itself would compromise security.

Over the winter break, as an interim security measure, we installed a doorbell at the entrance to each elementary and middle school. The front doors are locked during the school day; an employee lets visitors into the school and takes them to the office. Only one door is open to the public during the day. The high schools will continue to monitor their front doors with either school personnel or the school resource officers.

We plan to install, as a permanent security measure, a camera and buzzer system at each elementary and middle school as soon as we can. This will alleviate the need for employees to leave their desks to let visitors into the school. We are also investigating the possibility of some physical enhancements just beyond the entrances at some schools that would guide visitors directly into the office. Increased signage, both inside and outside of the schools, will be posted.

All schools have emergency preparedness plans. We are reviewing these plans with the Police Department and will make changes as necessary. Lockdown drills will be enacted at each school on a regular basis, with input from the Police Department as needed. Each school will have a thorough review of its physical environment by the Police Department and improvements will be made as warranted. The specifics of the emergency plans and other "behind the scenes" improvements in our security cannot be shared with the public.

Our Police Department will be providing training to our administrators and other staff members over the next several months. In addition, the Police Department will be available to make

presentations at PTA meetings upon request. We are very grateful to the leadership of the Police Department for committing additional resources to school safety that include more active patrolling of the school sites, training of personnel and recommending enhanced security measures for our schools.

Community members, including parents and guardians, can also play a vital role in school security by reporting anything suspicious to the police. This may include suspicious vehicles, people, behaviors, or activities that are observed in and around schools. We are thankful to have a supportive and cooperative community that has been understanding and patient as we work together to enhance security.

Our commitment to safety does not end with these measures. We will be constantly reviewing our security needs with experts locally and across the state and country. The Newtown tragedy has forever changed how we think about school safety and this change may require us to seek funding for more changes down the road. In the meantime, please be assured that we are taking every step possible to make the Fairfield Public Schools a safe place to learn and work.

Sincerely,



David G. Title

DT/mb

c: Board of Education Members
Chairman, Board of Finance
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K12 Alert (All)
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