



MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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William O. George III, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

February 21, 2018

Dear Middletown school community members,

We are deeply saddened by the recent tragedies related to school violence. These events have heightened our community's awareness of school security. We feel it is important to reassure you that we put student and staff safety as our top priority by providing you with accurate information regarding school security.

The Middletown Township Public School District and the Middletown Township Police Department work together to keep our students safe. On a regular basis, administration and the Supervisor of Security collaborate with the police and other emergency management organizations on planning, training, and daily security matters. The partnership begins each summer with a review of the district's security plan. Throughout the year, the district and police collaborate to train staff and students, monitor implementation of security procedures, evaluate and enhance security of our facilities, investigate potential threats to student safety, and maintain a security presence in our schools and at our events as needed. To enhance police response in the event of an emergency, communication capabilities between the police and building administration have been enhanced and the district has entered into an agreement to provide police viewing access to the district wide surveillance system at their headquarters and in their patrol cars. The partnership between the district and the police has had an exponentially positive effect on the overall security of our schools.

Training and practice in carrying out our security plans is essential. Security training is provided to administrators throughout the year and at least annually to all staff. Safety drills are held at least twice monthly and include various scenarios that prepare our students and staff to make quick and appropriate decisions during emergency situations. The Supervisor of Security oversees the completion of all drills and works with administration to enhance the response of staff and students. Police monitor our practice drills and provide feedback. Police also train in our buildings to better prepare for an emergency response.

In the past two years, the district has made security upgrades to our school facilities of over \$2.3 million. These upgrades improved and expanded surveillance and communication capabilities, enhanced access control, and strengthened our position to potential intruders. Security personnel assignments have also been extended at each high school to include a security guard after the school day. The requirement for the presence of security at events held outside the school day by parents and community members, as well as mandated training for these groups, has enhanced the safety of our school community members including students and parents attending the events.

The culture and climate of a school greatly impacts school safety, which is evident from past acts of school violence in our country. Our school counselors, including social behavior support specialists, guidance counselors, child study teams, student assistance counselors, and outside agency counselors in our schools support student social and emotional well-being. Character education programs and anti-bullying training promotes positive behaviors and good decision making skills in our students. Staff and administration collaborate to build positive relationships with their students, who are encouraged to report

potential bullying or other negative behaviors, and students feel safe doing so. District administration and staff are dedicated to promoting positive school climate and culture in their buildings and the district is committed to providing appropriate resources to support students socially and emotionally.

Providing a safe and secure school requires collaboration among staff, students and community members as well as the involvement of law enforcement and emergency management organizations. The district is committed to a practice of collaboratively reflecting on our school security practices and making the necessary changes and enhancements to safeguard our dedicated staff and exceptional students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William O. George, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "W" and a long, sweeping underline.

William O. George, III, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools