



BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS/SPECIAL SERVICES

District Administrative Office

540 Farview Avenue, Paramus, New Jersey 07652 • Tel. (201) 343-6000

September, 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As a District, we are committed to being proactive in doing everything possible to protect our students and staff. Over the years, experience tells us that students rely and find comfort in adults who can guide them during emergencies. Prevention, preparedness, responding, and recovery are the necessary key elements for crisis planning. Safety has evolved into being a multifaceted District initiative involving continuous communication and effective partnerships with Law Enforcement, administration, staff, students, and parents. Best Practices have been integrated into our schools' security procedures and protocols. Therefore, below are some of the pertinent topics that have been addressed and implemented throughout the school year.

Our District has a comprehensive Security Plan in place and rigorously trains staff to handle various emergency situations. As a result of November 1, 2010, as per N.J.S. 18A: 41-1, every school is required to conduct one fire drill and one security drill each month within the school hours including any summer months during which school is open for instructional programs. Students and staff practice and experience what is expected of them during these security drills. Law Enforcement always plays an integral part in our drills and keeping our students safe. During the academic year, schools are required to:

- conduct a minimum of two of the following Security Drills: Active Shooter; Bomb Threat; Evacuation; and Lockdown
- other types of Security Drills practiced during the year are the following: Shelter in Place; Testing of the Schools Notification System and Procedures; Tabletop Exercise; and Reverse Evacuations
- perform two School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drills as per New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC 6A:27-11.2)

Our current Memorandum of Agreement between the District and Law Enforcement ensures a cooperative and positive working relationship which incorporates procedural safeguards for the community. The District maintains a close and strong partnership with the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Management (OEM), County Fire Marshall, and EMS to assist us with maintaining safe and secure schools by adhering to the following:

- coordinate with local emergency responders updating safety/security plans and procedures for drilling, managing and responding to emergency situations
- in-service safety/security training for staff and students throughout the year in consultation with Law Enforcement
- monthly District Safety/Security Meeting conducted with central and campus administration including the Athletic Director, Adult School, Bergen County Sheriff's Office, Day Care Center, Operations, OEM, School Resource Officers, Technology, and Transportation to assess our drills and procedures
- SROs, security guards, visitor's policy, and digital internal and external cameras on the campuses
- Safety/Security training for athletic coaches

As parents, you play an essential role in promoting school safety by following procedures. We realize open communication is critical to the safety and well-being of our community. *Should there be an emergency situation, Law Enforcement mandates that you do not go to your child's/children's school.* The District will immediately notify you through text, email and phone. Therefore, your contact information should always be updated and accurate.

Be assured that the safety of our students continues to be a priority. We want your child/children to feel safe in a school community where they are respected, trusted and connected. In this day and age, we all play a vital role in school safety. We encourage you to please talk to them about safety/security issues at home and in school.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me via email at patcos@bergen.org. Thank you for your support and cooperation in keeping our students safe.

Sincerely,

Patricia Cosgrove

Patricia Cosgrove
District Supervisor