



# Clark Public Schools

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March 9, 2018

Dear Members of the Clark Schools Community,

The tragedy in Florida obviously places school security in the front of all of our minds. The victims and their families are and will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers for a long time. At the same time, strong security always has been and will continue to be a central focus in our schools. In fact, when I speak with our new teachers at their orientation every August, I always quiz them on the fact that while providing the students with a superior education is our main goal, security needs are our top priority. Below is a listing of some of the measures that we already have in place.

- At least two drills, one security and one fire, are conducted at each of our schools each month, with a given security drill being repeated if concerns exist as to the effectiveness of its implementation. These drills occur at different times during the school day as a means of simulating various scenarios that could accompany an actual crisis, e.g., not only during class time but within a lunch period. In addition, representatives from the Clark Police Department observe and provide feedback.
- A districtwide incident command system is in place to ensure that each of our individual schools is properly communicated with in the case of an actual emergency. Each of our schools has a school-based crisis response team and Mr. Robert Sarnecki, our Director of Security, attends training sessions each year in order to keep abreast of the most current thinking and trends. I am proud to say that Mr. Sarnecki put a number of procedures into place for us prior to them becoming state mandates and that our overall approach has been validated through visits from the New Jersey Department of Education. All of our staff members, inclusive of part-time employees and substitutes, receive annual training on our security procedures in order for these individuals to be best prepared not only for our drills but for a true crisis situation.
- We are thankful for our beyond strong, healthy relationship with the Clark Police, the Clark Fire Department, and the Clark Office of Emergency Management. They are always proactive and collaborative in their approach and immediate in their response. Our Memorandum of Agreement with the Clark Police is updated annually as is our District Crisis Manual.
- In terms of resources, around-the-clock camera coverage exists throughout our schools and the Clark Police have access to the live streaming videos. A number of “walkie-talkies” are used throughout each school on a daily basis and the Clark Police have our district frequency. Each classroom door is locked with a “lock block” in place so that these rooms can instantaneously become secured. All exterior doors are locked and our staff members have swipe cards or key fobs in order to gain entry access to our buildings. A defined procedure is in place for all visitors to gain entry access and, should there be an issue, the office staff does not permit this access and immediately contacts an administrator.

With all that being said, we are constantly seeking ways to become even stronger in terms of enhanced security. Since the recent tragedy, our building administrators, Mr. Sarnecki, our Board of Education members, and I have met with Police Chief Matos and Detectives Joy and Soos to review our pre-existing measures and to brainstorm additional measures. In fact, the Board of Education developed a Security Committee devoted solely to examining such issues on an ongoing basis and the following changes will be in place upon the students' return from spring break on Monday, April 9, 2018. The goal behind these changes is to make our buildings even more secure by limiting the amount of people who are granted visitor entry access. When this access is granted, we need to make certain not to hold the door open for someone who might be behind us, even if he or she has a familiar face, because doing so gives that individual unintended access.

- No visitor entry access, including to parents, will be granted within a fifteen-minute window of time on both ends of student arrival and dismissal. In other words, no visitors will be granted building access between the following times at each school.

School	Arrival Window	Dismissal Window
ALJ	7:35 a.m. to 8:05 a.m.	2:05 p.m. to 2:35 p.m.
CHK	7:50 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.	2:27 p.m. to 2:57 p.m.
FKH	8:25 a.m. to 8:55 a.m.	2:40 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.
VRS	8:25 a.m. to 8:55 a.m.	2:40 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.
CPA	8:45 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.	3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- Any visitor entry access outside of those time windows must be accompanied by a previously arranged appointment.
- No visitor entry access will be granted in order for items to be dropped off for students, e.g., lunch, physical education clothes, or homework/projects. A drop-off box will be at the front door of each school for these items to be left in. Any items must be clearly labeled with the student's name and grade level. In addition, money may not be dropped off. If lunch money is forgotten, the student will be provided with a lunch and then his or her parent will subsequently be charged. When leaving the item in the box, please ring the door buzzer in order to notify the school office of the drop-off so that the item can be brought to the student upon the availability of the office staff.

Again, these changes are being put into place for the safety and security of our students and staff members. We appreciate your cooperation in advance and hope that you find the information given above to be helpful. If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please contact Mr. Sarnecki at [rsarnecki@clarkschools.org](mailto:rsarnecki@clarkschools.org) or 732-382-0910 ext. 3166. I also can always be reached at the contact information given in the header of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

*Edward Grande*

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