



February 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Waynesboro City Public School division is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for our students and your children. With recent events in the forefront of our community's thoughts, below is some information about security and safety in our schools.

Safety procedures – All schools and the division have a crisis management plan that is based on best practices from the Virginia Department of Education, Department of Criminal Justice Services, and local law enforcement. Our staff is trained on procedures within the plans. Also, our staff has been trained in Trauma Informed Care and sixty of our staff members across all of schools have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Our goal is to support students in crisis so outcomes are positive.

Students and staff participate in drills throughout the year. In addition, our school division regularly processes situations with the Waynesboro Police Department, Valley Community Services Board, and other community providers who support our students and schools.

We have recently implemented additional safety measures at the schools, including camera upgrades and the Ident-a-kid sign-in system. We are appreciative of the support of our growing WatchDOGS program. The school division is also exploring other security measures at all of our schools.

Local law enforcement – The school division greatly appreciates the cooperation of the Waynesboro City Police Department to provide for the safety of our students. We have two full-time School Resource Officers as well as the support of our on-duty officers throughout the school day and during extra-curricular events.

Communication – Communication between schools and the community is vital to the safety and security of our students. We encourage all stakeholders to share safety concerns with school-based administration and central office staff. In the event of an emergency, we will use the usual notification tools (SchoolMessenger, news outlets, and division website) to provide communication with families.

Support – Many of you may have questions about how to address concerns about safety with your children. Our school counselors are available for your student during the school day, and here is some additional information for parents and guardians:

- Try to keep routines as normal as possible. Children gain security from the predictability of routine, including attending school.
- Limit exposure to television news and social media.
- Be honest and share with children as much information as they are developmentally able to handle.
- Let your child know with whom they can talk if they have any questions or concerns. This could be any adult such as parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.
- Reassure children that the world is a good place and most people do good things, but that there are people who do bad things.

Finally, the administrators, teachers, and staff are committed to keeping our students safe. We know that the entire Waynesboro community shares that commitment. Please let us know if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Cassell, Ed.D.
Superintendent

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