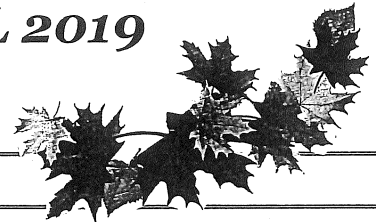


GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER

FALL 2019



School Safety – Reunification

Lancaster Schools remain committed to the safety of its students: a commitment that includes an investment in both resources and in training.

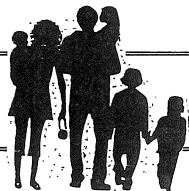
Classrooms and offices are equipped with WAVE system buttons which immediately contact 911, alert the police to the location of the alert (classroom/office) and alert the entire school that an alarm has been sounded. In addition, all windows have been covered with a shatterproof film. *(Note: this is not bulletproof, but rather it is designed to make entry through the glass a very slow process).* This is significant as most school shootings are over in a matter of minutes.

Training is both an ongoing and reflective process. After each training and/or drill, school personnel and police officials review with the goal of improving safety.

Last fall, we did a mock school shooter drill in which we practiced some core response principles: Evacuate, Go to Rally Points and then to a Reunification Center. *(Note: when evacuation is not feasible, students and staff are taught to lock down in silence.)*

At this time, I would like to reflect on the Reunification Stage; the point at which students are reunited with their parents. Feedback from parents and from staff showed how difficult this stage was. The reunification center is a secure setting which is guarded by law enforcement and staff for student protection.

Reunification from Parents View



A school shooting has happened. I may or may not know if my child is safe. I am fighting panic. I am scared to death. All I want to do is hug my child and take them out of this madness and into the safety of our home. I show up to pick my child and I am denied admission and told to wait. I am asked for ID. What is going on here? All I want to do is be reunited with my child. Don't they understand this? I have children in other schools who were affected. I need to get home to them.

Reunification Staff/Police View

I am panicked and doing everything I can to be calm. I need to keep my kids safe. This is chaos. I have twenty-some kids to account for. Some want to just leave. I don't even know who the shooter is. When someone walks up, is it safe? My phone is blowing up. I am trying to let administration know students I can't account for. They are trying to give me instructions on the next thing to do. So many questions are coming my way. We have made it to the reunification center. What about my missing kids? Are they safe? Thank God! So much chaos. Hundreds of people and so much fear and uncertainty. We are still on guard. Who are the shooters? Will they target students here? Have police indicated it is safe to release students? Parents are demanding to take their kids. They claim to be the parents, but I don't know. I want to do the right thing. I am overwhelmed, but trying to do the right thing to make sure my kids are safe.

Safe Reunification – Our Common Goal



God forbid we ever have a school shooting, but at the end of the day, both the parent and the teacher have the same goal; students safely reunited with their parents. Reunification works best when both sides understand their common goal has them working together.