



March 9, 2018

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The Painesville City Local School District is always committed to maintaining a learning environment in which students feel safe, supported, and connected. The recent events in Florida have prompted wider community involvement in the discussion about what measures are taken in our schools to ensure that they are secure and protected. The district's overall safety preparations involve several key components:

- **Facility Security and General Safety Practices-** Video cameras operate throughout and around all of our buildings at all times. All doors are required to be closed and locked while school is in session, and visitors must be "buzzed in" by school staff. All staff, coaches, and volunteers who regularly work with our students are required to undergo an FBI background check.
- **Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan-** The district plan, developed collaboratively with fire and safety forces and state safety consultation, outlines steps and responsibilities for a wide range of emergency situations. Drills corresponding to certain areas of the plan are conducted throughout the school year, and revisions are made whenever needs are identified.
- **Staff Training-** PCLS staff are trained in emergency response, including an active shooter scenario. The Painesville City Police Department will be progressively more involved in these trainings.
- **Strong Relationship with the Painesville City Police Department-** School resource officers are on staff at both Harvey High School and Heritage Middle School. Additionally, day-shift officers are frequently present and visible in all of our schools. PCLS will be facilitating training with the department to ensure that officers are maximally prepared to respond to emergencies in our buildings. The district and the police department constantly share information in an effort to keep our schools and our community safe.
- **School Climate and Student Support-** Efforts to ensure that students feel mentally and emotionally secure are a critically important aspect of school safety. It is our goal to see that every student has a positive and trusting relationship with school staff and classmates. To achieve this goal, all of our schools have implemented community-building and anti-bullying measures. Every school in the district has received state recognition for our program of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, including Harvey High School receiving the highest honor for quality programming. Further, students have access to a wide range of mental and behavioral health services. All of these efforts are ongoing, and we are constantly seeking to improve them.
- **Safe Schools Tip Line-** An anonymous tip line is now available to students and any member of our community to report any potential threats or unsafe situations. By calling or texting **1-844-SaferOH (1-844-723-3764)**, anyone can report a concern to the Ohio Homeland Security Threat Assessment and Prevention unit. Once the report is evaluated, if action is deemed warranted, it is then forwarded on to district officials and local law enforcement.

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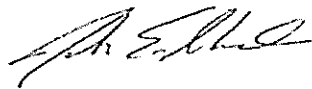
Maintaining a safe learning environment is a never-ending endeavor. It requires a sustained, team effort from every member of the school community. Each of us plays an essential role. School staff must enforce safety policies and procedures, make continuous efforts to connect with students in positive ways, and report any safety concerns to administration immediately.

Students must immediately report to the school anything they see as a potential threat. If they would rather remain anonymous, they may access the tip line referenced above. Students must never open a door for a visitor to the school - this must be left to school staff in accordance with established procedure. Further, students are reminded that the people in our schools are here to help them. If they are experiencing difficulties, the school will work with the family to be certain that the support they need is made available.

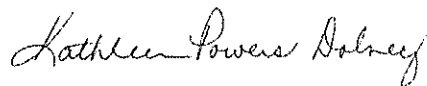
Families must talk with their children frequently in order to identify if anything is happening with them or around them which could be cause for concern. If there is, an open line of communication with the school must be established. Families must reinforce the message of "see something, say something" to remove fear or discomfort when it comes to reporting potential dangers. Finally, and most importantly, every family in the community must ensure a safe and secure home, ensuring that children do not possess or have access to anything dangerous which could be brought into school. Families must be ever vigilant of the activities of their children, including on social media. While this can be difficult - especially as our children grow older - it is our essential duty as parents that we must always maintain as a top priority. Safe schools begin with safe homes.

We need everyone's help in keeping our children safe. Thank you for your support of our schools and community. We are safer when we work together.

Yours in Education,



Joshua M. Englehart, PhD.  
Interim Superintendent



Kathleen Powers-Dolney  
Board President