



BLOOMSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY UPDATE

Since our last safety and security update in August, we have taken additional steps to increase the security of our school buildings. We understand that learning cannot occur unless our students, faculty, and staff feel safe within their surroundings. That said, there is a delicate balance to be struck between hardening our buildings and softening our position with students. We are committed to fostering the proper environment for all of our students to reach the district's vision of Success *and* Connection.

ADDITIONAL STEPS TAKEN SINCE AUGUST 2018

Additional School Security Personnel

In order to provide coverage at the secondary complex in the event of an absence and to allow for visibility of security at the elementary schools, the Board of Education hired an additional security guard on November 5, 2018.

School Security Guard Policy 709.1 Approval

Following legal review and extensive discussion by the Board of Directors, Policy 709.1 School Security Guards was approved on second reading on November 5, 2018. This policy enables properly trained and Act 235 certified security guards to carry a firearm while exercising their duties on campus.

Safe Crisis Management (SCM) Training

The district utilizes Safe Crisis Management (SCM) as its preferred training program for preventing and managing crisis events. Participating faculty, staff, and administrators are trained to prevent, de-escalate, and when necessary, respond to aggressive behavior. All certified individuals receive recertification every year by one of two district trainers. Since the last update, the district has increased the number of trained personnel to 41. This number includes both school security guards.

Safe2Say Team Creation and Training

As per Act 44 of 2018, the State Attorney General's Office established the Safe2Say Anonymous Tip Line, which is expected to go live in January 2019. Any tips that are relevant to our school district will be shared immediately with local law enforcement and our District Safe2Say Team. The District Safe2Say Team members received training on December 5, 2018 and are prepared for the program's launch in a few weeks.

ALICE Active Shooter Training

One administrator attended ALICE Active Shooter Training in October 2018 in order to determine ways in which we can increase our situational awareness and emergency preparedness. Both security guards will attend the same training in the spring. All school personnel will be trained by these individuals prior to the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

Law Enforcement and First Responder Walkthrough & Lunch

On September 11, 2018, law enforcement officials and first responders were invited to tour all district buildings in accordance with Act 44 of 2018. Following the walkthroughs, they were provided lunch in appreciation for the work they do throughout our community.

Grant Award to Improve District Surveillance Systems

In an effort to upgrade all district buildings to the level of surveillance available at the secondary complex, the district applied for a School Safety and Security Grant. The district was awarded the grant and will receive \$25,000 to move forward with surveillance upgrades to the elementary buildings. The district will budget for the remaining upgrades to occur before the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

Emergency Drills in All Buildings

As required by law, all school buildings have conducted one emergency drill during which local law enforcement were invited to attend. Additional drills are likely before the end of the school year. While the actual date and time are not revealed in advance, all parents are notified that they are coming.

STEPS TAKEN PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Pennsylvania State Police Active Shooter Training

As part of the district in-service activities in August 2018, Sergeant Ott of the Intelligence Division, Domestic Security Section of the Pennsylvania State Police provided an Active Shooter Presentation. During his time with the faculty, he reviewed response tactics and mental strategies necessary to react in crises.

Capital Project Planning Based on Results of Risk & Vulnerability Assessment

Recommendations from the Risk & Vulnerability Assessment were shared with the district's architect in order to include Best Practice Standards when applicable. The board-approved Capital Renovation for the secondary complex includes secure main entries for both the middle and high school as a result. Additionally, an after-hours entry to the swimming pool, wrestling room, and robotics area will be constructed. These improvements will be complete for the 2019-2020 school year.

Grant Application to Improve District Surveillance Systems

In an effort to upgrade all district buildings to the level of surveillance available at the secondary complex, a grant was written for consideration by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office for Safe Schools. If the grant is not received, the district will budget for the upgrades to occur before the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

Guidance Counselor Expansion District-Wide

The number of district-employed guidance counselors increased to eight (two each at Memorial Elementary, Bloomsburg Middle and Bloomsburg High School, one each at W. W. Evans Elementary and Beaver Main Elementary). This move allows for ongoing support and training through an expressive arts program that not only provides fundamental instruction in safety and security issues, but also fosters whole child development.

Columbia Montour Snyder Union (CMSU) Prevention Specialist

The CMSU Service System provides mental health, drug/alcohol, and intellectual disability services within Columbia County. The district partnered with the organization to fund a Prevention Specialist, who is working in the Bloomsburg High School to provide group counseling and drug/alcohol prevention services.

School Security Personnel at the Secondary Complex

Following the Bloomsburg Town Council Finance Committee's rejection of the proposal for a School Resource Officer (SRO) within the district, the Board of Education hired a security officer on August 20, 2018.

Board of Education Consideration of Armed Security Officers

The security officer hired on August 20, 2018 is a retired corrections officer, who holds the Act 235 Certification to be armed. The decision to allow him to be armed will be considered by the Board of Education at its next scheduled meeting on September 4, 2018.

School Safety & Security Coordinator

As per Act 44 of 2018, Governor Wolf signed into law on June 22, 2018, each district must name a School Safety and Security Coordinator. On August 20, 2018, the Board of Education approved Melissa Day, Director of Curriculum & Instruction for this role. Duties include, but are not limited to:

- Oversee school security guard(s);
- Review safety/security policies and procedures to ensure compliance with law;
- Coordinate training for students and school entity staff;
- Coordinate school safety and security assessments, as necessary;
- Serve as liaison with the statewide School Safety and Security Committee;

- Report to the school entity board (via executive session) by June 30 each year on school safety and security;
- Coordinate a biennial tour of the school entity's buildings and grounds with law enforcement and first responders to discuss/coordinate school safety/security matters.

Community Forums

Last fall, the district organized a series of Community Forums on Safety at which participants were encouraged to ask questions and offer suggestions. A final report was shared with the Board of Education in December 2017 and posted on the district website for review. The decision to pursue a School Resource Officer (SRO) in cooperation with the Town of Bloomsburg Police Department was part of this report.

Pennsylvania State Police Risk & Vulnerability Assessment

The Domestic Security Division of the Pennsylvania State Police operates a Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Team (RVAT) for use by public and private organizations to evaluate facilities for threat potential. Following the extensive evaluation, the team shares a confidential assessment with the entity that includes recommendations to improve the overall security of the facility. An evaluation of the Bloomsburg Area High School occurred in March 2018 and the results have been used to determine necessary security enhancements throughout the district.

Pennsylvania State Constables

In order to provide more immediate security while the School Resource Officer (SRO) process occurred, Pennsylvania State Constables were contracted for the secondary complex. Two guards were present through the end of 2017, with one remaining for the rest of the school year. Guards were also contracted for extra-curricular events throughout 2017-2018.

Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)

Students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 completed the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), sponsored by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency (PCCD). The results of this survey were received in spring, 2018 and can be used to determine patterns in the community specific to risk factors such as access to drugs/alcohol and firearms, bullying, and mental illness. The district can use these patterns in order to determine the best means for prevention.

Safe Crisis Management (SCM) Training

The district utilizes Safe Crisis Management (SCM) as its preferred training program for preventing and managing crisis events. Participating faculty, staff, and administrators are trained to prevent, de-escalate, and when necessary, respond to aggressive behavior. All 35 certified individuals receive recertification every year by one of two district trainers.

Secondary Complex Surveillance System

The secondary complex received a surveillance system upgrade in order to improve the level of surveillance available to administrators and law enforcement. These upgrades provided additional cameras in high traffic areas, many of which provide 360 degree recording and playback capabilities.

Social Emotional Learning Conference

One administrator and one guidance counselor attended the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) conference in May 2018. As part of this conference, the participants learned additional strategies for teaching important social skills that are necessary for successful peer interaction in schools.

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued feedback and support of the Bloomsburg Area School District. On a human level, we want to assure each of you that the safety of our students and each of our staff is our paramount concern. We will not waiver on this fact.