



## BLOOMSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY UPDATE, 6.15.20

Since our last safety and security update in February, 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**.

### STEPS TAKEN DURING 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

#### **Spring Law Enforcement & First Responder Walkthroughs**

In addition to the walkthrough held in September 2019, all local law enforcement and first responders were invited for a walkthrough in May. Given the extended school closure, all participants were contacted and invited to attend an individual walkthrough based on their availability.

#### **Surveillance System Upgrades at the Secondary Complex**

Installation of the upgraded surveillance systems was completed in April for the Secondary Complex which includes outdoor facilities including Panther Stadium and renovated fields. The District received grant funding to complete the process.

#### **Capital Project Work on Secure Entry at the Secondary Complex**

Work on the secure entry for the secondary complex was completed in December 2019. Visitors for both the middle and high schools should utilize the Railroad Street visitor parking lot and new entry for all visits, drop-offs, and pick-ups. This entry was constructed based on the results of the PA State Police Risk & Vulnerability Assessment, which was completed in March 2018.

#### **Surveillance System Upgrades at W.W. Evans & Beaver-Main Elementary Schools**

Installation of the upgraded surveillance systems was completed in February for both Beaver-Main and W.W. Evans Elementary Schools. The District received grant funding to complete the process.

#### **Installation of Stop the Bleed Kits**

All five buildings received Stop the Bleed kits from Geisinger as part of the District's participation in training. These kits are now mounted next to the existing AED units in each building.

### **National Association of School Resource Officers Training Course**

In compliance with the newest legislation governing school security personnel, Act 67, school security personnel were trained by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO).

### **Fall Law Enforcement & First Responder Walkthroughs**

All local law enforcement and first responders were invited for a fall walkthrough on November 18, 2019. The invitation list included Beaver Township Fire Department, Buckhorn Community Fire Department, Columbia County Emergency Management, Hemlock Township Police Department, Main Township Police and Fire Department, Montour Township Police and Fire Department, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Town of Bloomsburg Police and Fire Company. Following the walkthroughs, they were provided lunch in appreciation for the work they do throughout our community.

### **Grant Application to Improve District Surveillance Systems**

A grant was written for consideration by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office for Safe Schools to increase surveillance at both Beaver-Main and W.W. Evans Elementary Schools. Given the status of the grant, the District expects to receive the \$35,000 award and will schedule the installation for January 2020.

### **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 32 certified individuals, including both security guards, receive recertification every year by one of two district trainers.

### **Trauma-Informed Classroom Training**

Through our partnership with CMSU, Trauma Training was provided for all personnel during our October in-service. This 3.5-hour training by Lakeside NeuroLogic Initiative informed participants on the physical, mental, and social outcomes of trauma. Additionally, best practices in creating trauma-informed classrooms were shared. Beyond this training, the District has created a professional development plan to continue this work throughout the school year.

### **Stop the Bleed Training by Geisinger**

As part of our in-service activities in October, all District personnel received Stop the Bleed training through Geisinger. Not only is the one-hour training free of charge, but it also included five Stop the Bleed kits (one for each building) for use in an emergency. Although this additional training will meet the three-hour training requirement as per Act 44 of 2018, our emergency preparedness work will continue beyond compliance.

### **Emergency Drills in All Buildings**

As required by law, all school buildings conducted one emergency drill during which local law enforcement were invited to attend. Additional drills are likely throughout the school year. While the actual times are not revealed in advance, all parents are notified of the dates and then again notified when they are completed.

### **Participation in Lehigh Valley School Security Symposium**

Both the School Safety & Security Coordinator and one of our school security guards attended the School Security Seminar sponsored by the American Society of International Security (ASIS), Lehigh Valley Chapter. Topics included Identifying At-Risk Behavior, Best Practices in Securing your School, and Pennsylvania Act 44.

### **STEPS TAKEN DURING 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR**

#### **Spring Law Enforcement & First Responder Walkthroughs**

In addition to the walkthrough held in September 2018, all local law enforcement and first responders were invited for a walkthrough in May. Columbia County Emergency Management as well as members from the Main Township and Beaver Township Fire Companies visited buildings in the summer. The fall walkthrough was attended by the Pennsylvania State Police, Montour Township Fire Company, and the Town of Bloomsburg Police and Fire Companies.

#### **Parent Letter Introducing School Security Guards & Safe2Say Something Reporting System**

On January 11, 2019, a letter was sent home with to all District families to inform them of the State Attorney General's Safe2Say Anonymous Reporting System. Given the timing of the letter, we included pictures of Mr. Stone and Mr. Hahn as well as a background of their training and experience.

#### **District School Safety & Security Update**

In order to keep our community informed of the work within our District, a description of all actions taken was shared on our website in December. All families were notified that it was posted via a One Call phone notification. The document is still available in the Announcements section of the website and under the Our District tab.

#### **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.

### **Pennsylvania State Police Emergency Planning at Beaver Main Elementary**

As part of our work to partner with local law enforcement and first responders, we met with members of the Pennsylvania State Police to review the grounds and facilities at Beaver Main Elementary and to discuss the current emergency plan to determine areas of need. This information was used to review emergency plans in other buildings as well.

### **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 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.

### **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 Memorial Elementary School.

### **Emergency Drills in All Buildings**

As required by law, all school buildings 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.

### **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. This two-hour training counts toward the three hours that are required every five years for all faculty and staff.

### **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 a secure main entry.

### **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 from five 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. The security officer hired on August 20, 2018 is a retired corrections officer, who holds the Act 235 Certification to be armed.

### **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.

## **STEPS TAKEN DURING 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR**

### **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.

### **Community Forums**

In the fall of 2017, 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 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) Participation**

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.