

### **School Emergency Preparedness Drill**

On Tuesday, April 18, 2023, we had the drug dog come in, and walk through our school with the officer. This is a routine procedure we try to do once a year. We were under an "alert" status during that time, which means teachers lock doors, and continue to teach as normal; students are just not allowed out of rooms. I all went very well, with no issues.

After the alert, Mr. Osterkamp and Mr. Boland went around to grades 5-12 and reviewed the alert situation with them. They explained what an alert was, and gave students examples of when the school would go to alert (examples: drug dog, someone with a medical emergency in the hallway, etc). Many of the teachers also followed up with students, talking about protocols and discussing why it was important to have them. The elementary students were talked to by their classroom teachers.

Mr. Osterkamp and Mr. Boland then explained to students grades 5-12 what a "lockdown" was. Middle school students were given a more scaled down version, appropriate for their age group. The procedures in a lockdown were discussed, and students were given examples of why we would lock down at school (examples: person with a weapon on the playground, or on the street in front of the school with a weapon, intruder in the building, etc.). We at school would not practice an actual lock down; if we went to a lock down it would be an actual emergency. Discussion was had on how to "avoid" the intruder or situation whenever possible, and what procedures students should follow in order to make that happen, whether inside the building or out. Protocols for dealing with a worst case scenario (if an intruder enters a room) were also briefly touched upon.

We considered the fact that a large number of school assaults are done in passing times, before or after school, or even after the fire alarm is pulled. Students may need to show initiative, and find safe rooms on their own, taking peers with them if teachers are not present in that area.

School personnel have had regular training on emergency situations. We have multiple drills during the year, some with only staff, and some with students present. It is important to do these drills unannounced; that way we can find areas we may need to improve on, or had not considered previously. The procedures we follow are consistent with our emergency response plan and guidelines, which are posted around the school.

It was emphasized to all groups that this was not an attempt to scare anyone, we only want students to think things through and have a plan to follow through on. We are required to do at least one of these per year, and report the results to the School Board. Just as schools have plans, individuals need to have plans. We also reminded students that most threatening situations do not happen at school, they happen in other public places such as churches, movie theaters, malls, concerts, etc. We want our students to be safe wherever they are. It is sad that we have to practice and consider such situations, but this is the reality of our society today.

We hope that these drills at school stimulate safety conversations at home. Please contact us if you have questions about this.