

All WASD Staff,

As we review our security protocol and safety across buildings in WASD at the start of the 23-24 school year, one of our most important assets is our own district staff. Your eyes and ears are essential in supporting our safety efforts. The district always has and will continue to make the safety of students and staff our number one priority.

We were one of the first districts in the state of PA to implement ALICE intruder protocol, and have been training all staff and students in ALICE for over 10 years. As in the past, over the first few weeks of this school year as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education we have held evacuation drills in all our K-12 schools involving local emergency providers. These evacuation drills are held annually along with monthly fire drills that occur in all schools and at the DSC. We have installed Stop the Bleed Kits in all district buildings, and trained over 700 staff in their use through our continued relationship with UPMC. Thanks to a 1-million-dollar investment in a new security camera system our K-12 schools now have a state-of-the-art system with over 600 cameras and sensors. The District has an upgraded main radio system to ensure seamless coverage across all schools, and bus routes that was completed in 2021. The District has improved school entry by finishing secure vestibule areas at Curtin Intermediate and Jackson Primary. During the summer of 2023, a secure vestibule area was created at WAHS. During the 2022-2023 school year we will be adding Verkada guest – visitor management system in all our school buildings that will strengthen our security measures. Finally, school door controllers and card readers were upgraded to interface with our Verkada camera system to provide digital security measures of doors that used throughout the daytime and evening hours last school year. This district has also added three hours of safety online training to serve as refresher courses for the 2023-2024 school year. They are entitled, *ALICE in Schools, Situation Awareness K-12, De-escalation: How to Diffuse Aggression, and Recognizing and Responding to Suspicious Activity in Your School.*

We are thankful for the relationship with the Williamsport Bureau of Police. We have a signed agreement to provide two full time School Resource Officers in the district who will help keep our schools safe and be a resource to District staff. Sargent Jody Miller and Officer Thad Trafford will serve as our full-time school resource officers primarily working in our middle and high school, but also serving our K-6 schools as needed. We added three school police officers that provide safety and security in our middle, intermediate, and primary schools. SPO Trent Peacock is assigned to Lycoming Valley Intermediate and Hepburn Lycoming Primary, SPO Ben Laurenson is assigned to Curtin Intermediate and Cochran Primary, and Officer Brett Herbst is assigned to Williamsport Area Middle School and Jackson Primary. All three of these school police officers have extensive law enforcement backgrounds.

Many of the procedures and protocol the district has implemented are a direct result of input from the Incident Command Committee that meets monthly and year-round in the district. This committee is made up of administrators from the central office and our schools, along with emergency personnel from all local law enforcement providers, and safety planners from UPMC Susquehanna and County Emergency planning. This committee is essential to our short-term and long-term emergency planning, and due to its make-up is able to provide the district with expertise across all emergency situations from weather emergencies, bus accidents, fire emergencies, and intruder events. This committee will continue working diligently to develop and review district planning for school safety across our seven schools in the district. The school district uses the Navigate online platform for all its school safety plans and has comprehensive safety plans developed for all schools using the PEMA template. All school district safety plans are shared with the county yearly to assist with emergency planning and state emergency guidelines.

As a reminder to all staff, you are a vital part of our school safety planning. Please ensure you are following the procedures below:

- Please do not unlock outside entry doors to school buildings. All exterior doors should be kept locked during the school day, and no exterior doors should be propped open with objects at any times. If you find an exterior door is not locked during the school day, please report it to a building administrator.
- All district employees should be wearing their school ID visible at all times while in buildings. This includes administration, teachers and support staff.
- All visitors must either wear a visible office issued ID badge, or their own agency ID badge when in buildings. If you see someone in a school without an ID badge or sticker, please confront them and ask why they are in the school.
- All visitors must enter the building through the main school entrance. Please do not let visitors in through side doors of schools. Please direct them to the main entrance.
- Please report all suspicious activity to an administrator at the school. Always error on the side of caution and report any unusual behavior that you may observe or hear by students or adults.