



February 16, 2018

Dear Chesapeake Public Schools Families:

We are all deeply saddened by the tragic events that unfolded Wednesday, February 14, 2018, at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families affected by this unthinkable tragedy and the teachers and staff who acted expeditiously to protect their students.

With more and more school shootings happening throughout the country, we realize that our parents, staff, and school community as a whole may be thinking about the school safety precautions in place in each of our schools. We want to reassure you that our number one priority is the safety and security of our students and employees.

The safety efforts that are in place at each of our schools are developed in conjunction with the Chesapeake Police Department and the Chesapeake Fire Department. Together, we want to share with you our proactive approaches to ensuring the safety of students and staff within our school division.

While it is important not to expose to the public every safety measure that is set in place, we feel it is important that you understand some of the relevant safety plans that are continually reviewed and updated throughout the school year.

For example, each school is required to draft a Safe Schools and Crisis Plan. This plan addresses a variety of crisis situation events such as lockdowns, fire drills, bomb threats, etc. While we certainly hope that engaging our emergency measures will never be necessary, we continue to review our safety plan, practice safety drills, review our safety practices and procedures, and communicate the importance of safety to our students and staff.

Students and staff are required by the state to practice mandatory lockdown drills four times a year with two drills taking place during the first 20 days of school. The third drill is conducted anytime during the first semester, and the fourth is conducted anytime during the second semester. One of the three drills conducted in the fall is a level-three lockdown drill that is completed in partnership with the Chesapeake Police Department and the Chesapeake Fire Department. After the drill, a debriefing session is held to allow members of each organization the opportunity to provide feedback, citing any areas in need of improvement.

Our division has school security monitors in place at each school. These security monitors participate in table-top training through the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Our Occupational Safety/Loss Control Specialist along with members from the Office of Pupil Discipline also participate in reunification training through the Department of Criminal Justice

services. In addition, we have 14 School Resource Officers assigned by the Chesapeake Police Department on site each day specifically to monitor and provide support to our schools.

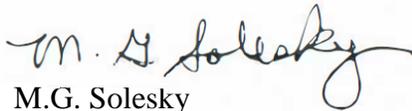
Lastly, parents, please take this time to remind your children that it is important that students, staff, and parents work together in keeping our schools safe. If they **“hear something”** or **“see something”** of concern, they should **“say something”** either to their parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, or another adult. The 24-hour hotline for the Chesapeake Police Department is also available to accept calls at 757-382-6161.

Again, please know that commitment to the safety of our students, employees, and visitors is always our top priority. We appreciate your continued support.

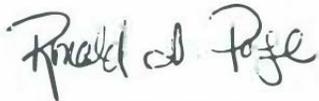
Thank you,



Jacqueline C. Miller
Assistant Superintendent for Student Services



M.G. Solesky
Deputy Chief of Police



Ronald I. Page
Deputy Fire Marshal 6
Fire Prevention Division

Attachment: Lockdown Drills



Chesapeake Public Schools

Lockdown Drills

What is a lockdown?

A school lockdown removes people from open areas and/or confines all staff and students to the classroom or a secured space due to a perceived or real threat; isolation of staff and students inside the school limits exposure to risk from the outside. The practice of lockdown drills acclimates both staff and students to the process.

When should a school go into “lockdown” and who makes this decision?

There are several reasons. There may be an unwelcome person or persons on the campus grounds; local law enforcement has identified a threat in the immediate area of the school; or a menacing animal is on school grounds. In short there is some sort of event occurring, or threatening to occur; that the school believes can be mitigated by limiting access to staff and students.

Building principals and administrative staff can initiate lockdown status or be prompted by the city’s emergency responders (police/fire).

Why do we perform lockdown drills?

Just as we have practiced fire drills in schools for years, we are preparing for an unknown event, one we hope never happens. We want students and staff to be comfortable and proficient under a variety of circumstances. We perform drills to find ways to make the emergency plan better. We use required documentation to evaluate what works and what needs to be changed.

****During a lockdown drill or situation, parents must not attempt to enter the building until the area has been secured by local law enforcement or cleared by school administration. ****

What to tell students/children?

Our children are keenly aware of “lockdowns” and the current need for safety. With this in mind tell the students simply that this drill or event is designed to keep them as safe as possible. Advise them to follow instructions during drills and remember how important it will be to follow the rules given.

****The Chesapeake Police and Fire Department are aware of the impact this has on the school professionals, parents and students. The staff and students safety is our top priority. We do not take this matter lightly. We will always try to limit the disruption to the school and their valuable teaching/learning time.****