



Appleton Area *School District*

TO: Appleton Area School District (AASD) Staff & Board of Education
FROM: District Leadership Team
DATE: January 2013
RE: **Safe and Secure Schools**

While we continue to contemplate the seemingly unimaginable tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, please know that we are doing all we can to appropriately address the safety of our students and staff across our District. Our District's safety committee is meeting on a regular basis to review what can be learned from this incident to help us best ensure the safety of students and staff members in the AASD. Our ongoing goal is to continue to focus on safety for all students and staff while balancing our need to provide open and caring environments at each of our school sites where students, staff, parents, and community members feel welcome and safe.

In addition to maintaining appropriate safety and security measures across all schools, it is just as important to continue to foster and support a caring and connected community within the AASD. Former school principal and school safety expert Bill Bond said it best when he stated the following about school shootings: "It's a problem that can only be solved with more caring...not just more security." To date, no school shooting has ever been averted without students coming forward and letting their parents, teachers, or administrators know about a potential threat. Therefore, we must continue to remind our children, and our parents, that we all share in the responsibility of keeping our schools safe by letting school officials know if they have a safety or security concern. Below is some information specific to what the AASD has been doing to ensure that all of our school sites are as safe as possible.

The AASD has a strong track record of providing a safe learning environment for all students, staff, parents, and volunteers in all of our schools. This commitment includes targeting a significant amount of money each year to support our school district safety initiatives.

Programs such as LINK Crew and PBIS have been implemented at all levels. These initiatives have involved staff training and are helping students feel more welcome and supported in our schools.

Several other safe school services, equipment, and environmental changes that the AASD has undertaken over the last decade include the following:

- **Safety Audits:** Completion of yearly safety audit at each school site.
- **Alarm Systems:** Fire alarm systems updated and security systems installed in all buildings.
- **Card Entry Systems:** All of our schools have card access in place.
- **Cell Phones:** Available District-wide.
- **Communications:** All classrooms have phone system access.
- **Entrance Control:** Personnel monitoring, card access, and/or security camera surveillance in all District schools. Visitor sign-in procedures. There is ongoing review of areas of concern.
- **Exterior Door Control:** Limited access to all buildings, primarily through the front entrance only.
- **Imminent Threat Training:** Drills are conducted semi-annually at all schools.
- **Emergency Evacuation drills:** Tornado/Hazard drills are conducted semi-annually at all schools; fire drills occur monthly at all schools.
- **Locks on Classroom Doors:** All schools are completed.
- **Lock Down Procedures:** Implemented and active in all schools.

- **Personal ID Badge:** Mandatory for all employees.
- **PSL Services:** All of our schools are directly served by a Police School Liaison. This collaborative program between the Appleton Police, Grand Chute Police, and the District ensures a more secure and productive learning environment.
- **Security Cameras:** Installed at all school locations.
- **Security Lighting:** Adequate at all locations.
- **Vision Barriers:** Adjustments have been made at all necessary locations.
- **Tip Line:** Tip line programs have been in place since 2002.
- **School Messenger Automated Calling System.** All schools have the ability to call all parents in a very short period of time.

In closing, we hope this information has helped you to better understand all that is taking place to make our schools as safe as possible. Please know that this will continue to be an ongoing process. Therefore, we urge you to share any safety concerns or ideas you may have with your principal so that we can continue to improve. By working together both at our school site, and in our school communities, we can do our best to ensure that we are providing the most caring and safe environment possible for all students, staff, parents, and community members. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ben Vogel, chair of the District Safety Committee at 832-6465. Thanks for all that you continue to do on behalf of our students. It is appreciated!