



STATE OF CONNECTICUT



October 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The safety and well-being of children and everyone in our schools is our top priority. Recently, there have been several threats against schools in Connecticut, which has understandably caused some concern as the school year begins — a time usually filled with excitement and hope.

When your child's school learns about potential threats, please know that superintendents and school staff are dedicated to sharing information with families and the school community as quickly as possible. However, there may be limits to what can be shared due to the sensitive nature of the information and the need to keep everyone safe. Local police and first responders are members of School Security and Safety Committees, are fully updated on any threats made, and work closely with school staff to handle any safety concerns.

All schools in Connecticut must have a School Security and Safety Plan, created with input from School Security and Safety Committees. Plans focus on five important areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Specifically, efforts go into prevention, which means stopping violence before it happens, keeping everyone prepared and safe, responding quickly during emergencies, and sharing information effectively. To maintain everyone's safety, schools do not publicly share specific details of their School Security and Safety Plans.

Safety and security begin at home, and we encourage parents and caregivers to help us with this. Here are some ways families can support safe schools:

- Be aware of your child's online activities and the social media and gaming platforms they use.
- Discuss with your child the seriousness of threats to schools, emphasizing that they are not harmless jokes. Such threats and false reports can cause fear and lead to serious legal consequences, including arrest.
- Don't allow your child to bring toy guns or other pretend weapons to school as they may be seen as real, frighten others, cause disruption of the school day, and lead to discipline for your child, including suspension and expulsion.
- Monitor the personal information your child shares online, as it can be misused by strangers on the internet and gaming platforms.
- Encourage your child to report any threats or threatening behavior they see to local police or the school.
- Set a good example on social media, as children learn from adults how to behave online. Don't repost threats that you see on social media; instead, notify the police.
- Connecticut law requires that, if you have guns in your home, they must be stored in locked containers so that children cannot access them.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can help keep our students and school community safe.

Sincerely,

Ned Lamont
Governor
State of Connecticut

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Commissioner
CT State Department of Education

Ronnell A. Higgins
Commissioner
Department of Emergency Services
and Public Protection