

Parent Letter:

March 2, 2018

Subject: Actions to take care of our kids – School Violence

Parents,

I am very proud of our young people. The future is bright, because our young people provide light and hope for each new tomorrow. It is truly a pleasure working with our community's treasures. With the recent events that have occurred in Parkland, Florida, it tugs at the heart. As a community, I know we are grieving for the families who have lost loved ones in the awful tragedy. As a parent, I know you are feeling uncertainties. I also know you are experiencing the feelings of being scared and fearful of the what if's. As a parent and as a superintendent, I understand. I want our students to know that their safety is our top priority. I want our kids to know that they are important.

Parents, I know you feel vulnerable. I want you to know that I speak for the entire NLCS corporation staff in saying that we are committed to making sure that our kids are safe. If we can make sure that they are okay every moment of every day, we can teach them something along the way. Because we care so much, I have conducted three meetings with administrators specifically pertaining to school safety. Administrators are planning to conduct another violent intrusion drill with students during the Indiana Severe Weather Preparedness week. Sometime prior to the drill, teachers will be taking a few minutes just to reaffirm and discuss the purpose of the drill with their students. In addition to reaffirming how important our kids are to us, teachers will be reinforcing efforts. As teachers talk to our young people, they will be keeping discussions positive and reaffirming. They will also keep discussions age appropriate. The primary purpose of the discussions will be to reinforce:

1. Our kids are very important to us.
2. Our schools are safe places.
3. Our schools are friendly places, and
3. We do what we do because we care about our kids.

To ensure training and awareness, building administrators will be meeting with their faculty one day next week to cover their building emergency preparedness plans. During their respective staff meetings next week, administrators are planning to encourage staff to convey to our young people that if they See Something or Hear Something, Say Something. As teachers talk to students, they will be reinforcing the Cyber Bullying Hotline information to age appropriate groups. Each school building has a specific Cyber Bullying Hotline number. Even though it is called the Cyber Bullying Hotline, it can also be used as an Anonymous Tip Hotline. As building administrators have met together, we have talked about school climate. As administrators, we want our young people to feel safe, and we also want parents to have this same feeling about our schools.

This community is blessed, because BPD Chief Dennis Parsley and LCPD Sheriff Mike Branham are dedicated to providing whatever services are needed to make sure that our kids are safe. Dennis Parsley and Mike Branham have met with administrators within NLCS to talk about school safety. Dennis Parsley, Mike Branham, Greg Pittman, NLCS Legal Counsel, Corbin Dietrich,

NLCS CFO, and I are in the process of reviewing available options to see if we can generate the financial resources needed to possibly expand a law enforcement presence, to some degree, at the high school, the middle schools and into the elementary schools. Officials from the City of Bedford and Lawrence County are to be commended. They are looking for ways to support the endeavor. I truly appreciate their help, and I am very thankful for their support and their efforts. It takes a community working together to help our kids, and because of their efforts, our kids benefit.

Together, we can accomplish great things. As a school, we have an opportunity to help our kids cope with life and with school. Before we can help them with school, we have to help them cope with life. I want all of us, school staff and parents, to work together to support them as they strive to cope with the awful events that recently occurred.

Parents, thank you for allowing me and all NLCS staff to continue to work with our community's best, our young people. We encourage you to contact us with any thoughts and concerns. Your children matter, and we are honored to work with them. Thank you. Take care.

Respectfully,

Gary D. Conner

NLCS Superintendent