

Millis Public Schools School Safety Task Force

Fall, 2016



Introduction

Student safety is a most essential and foundational aspect of education; we in Millis Public Schools consider it a sacred responsibility. We are fortunate to have strong partnerships with other stakeholders and have worked diligently over the last six years to provide training and create a safety plan that endeavors to ensure a safe and secure environment for all students. We have trained all staff in these areas and discussed these topics with students with age-appropriate methods.

As a community, Millis is at the forefront of interagency preparedness for emergencies. We collaborate to inform the community regarding internet safety, cyber-bullying, general bullying and emergency protocols. Our public safety partners have held nighttime and vacation week trainings in our schools and other town buildings. The District Attorney's Office has been instrumental in assisting us with security grants and support for IMPACT, the comprehensive Incident Management Protocols And Critical Tasks.

Millis' School Safety Initiatives

Training

Each year in collaboration with community partners, all Millis Public Schools conduct:

- Fire drills
- Bus evacuation,
- Stay-in place drills
- Lockdown procedures
- Violent Intruder drills.

In addition, a School Safety Task Force convenes monthly and includes key Millis Public Schools administrative staff, Millis Police and Fire Chiefs and our School Resource Officer, to review and enhance our emergency response protocols to ensure the safety of students, schools and community. We have trained staff and developed resources to ensure that everyone is familiar with current procedures.

- There is only one point of entry in each building, it is locked and monitored.
- Visitors MUST identify themselves, sign in and wear a visitor's badge while in the school building.
- Surveillance cameras are mounted at each entry of the Middle/High School. Clyde Brown's surveillance system was upgraded with a Norfolk District Attorney's grant.
- Staff have identification badges with photographs

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- Our staff keycard system only admits those who have permission to gain access to the school at points of entry other than the front door.

Advanced training

Four years ago, we initiated advanced training in how to respond when confronted with violent intruders. This drill allowed students to experience a “Code Red” drill. “Code Red” is declared when, in the opinion of the Administrator-in-Charge, a situation exists that threatens the safety of students and staff and requires that they remain in their classrooms. During this exercise students and staff evacuate to designated “safe areas.” This drill was orderly, quiet and calm. At the conclusion of the drill, the normal school day resumed, and administration debriefed with public safety officials.

In 2015, a training session was held for all staff, including custodians, food service personnel, and paraprofessionals to prepare for an incidents, such as having an armed intruder in our buildings. This session included procedures such as enhanced lockdowns (barricading doors) and *hasty* evacuations with opportunities to debrief after practicing these new approaches. Synergy Solutions, a group that has trained over 10,000 educators since 2001, provided this training.

Over the years Millis Public Schools staff have attended several trainings sponsored by the District Attorney’s Office as well as workshops on social- emotional learning and health, wellness and stress management, Positive Behavioral Supports (PBIS), strategies for helping students who are at risk for self harm, suicide prevention, and other preventative strategies.

Millis Public Schools Safety Task Force Priorities 2016-2017

This year, in addition to training and public awareness activities, the Task Force identified the following priorities:

1. Develop an IMPACT Plan for Clyde Brown, aligned with those of the Middle/High School
2. Enhance communication channels with parents and the community
3. Explore ways to expand the presence of the School Resource Officer in schools
4. Seek grant funding to upgrade mobile communications between public safety and school personnel

Upcoming Activities

November Staff meetings: Police Chief Chris Soffayer will review the 4L’s (Locate, Lockdown, Leave and Live) procedure with all staff. Later in the month students in grades 5-12 will attend an introduction by the Chief to the 4 L’s procedures.

November 14th from 6:30-7:30: A Parent Informational Meeting on School Safety was held in the Auditorium of the Middle/High School with Chief Soffayer and the Administrative Team.

Conclusion

The strong collaborative relationship the school district has with the Millis Police and Fire Departments is an essential part of safety for our students. We thank these public servants for their support and are aware that Millis Public Schools is at the forefront of inter-agency safety preparedness due to the visionary leadership of our public safety departments.