

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Catherine C. Latham, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools*

February 15, 2018

To Our Parents and Guardians and the Entire Lynn Community

I am sure I speak for everyone when I say that we are horrified at the events that happened yesterday at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Seventeen innocent people and their families had their lives ruined in a matter of minutes. The fact that this was the eighteenth school shooting since the beginning of the year is equally horrifying. Our prayers go out to the families affected and the entire country in this terrible time of mourning.

I am sure that, as we reflect on this event, our own community is interested in knowing what safety measures are in effect at our schools. Safety and security is the most important concern for us, and we have taken major steps to keep our students, faculty and staff safe while in our buildings. We work hand-in-hand with Police Chief Michael Mageary, our own School Safety and Security Liaison Officer Oren Wright and the City of Lynn Emergency Management Team and have instituted an extensive array of safety and security policies, practices and protocols. We have regularly scheduled fire and lockdown drills, multi hazard evacuation plans, medical emergency response plans and active shooter plans. All plans and protocols are available in all schools.

Our schools are equipped with inside and outside cameras that are directly accessible to the Lynn Police Department, visitor access systems that provide for conversation and identification of visitors before outside doors are opened, key card access systems for employee use, and protocols that photograph and support positive identification of school visitors once inside. All classroom doors have safety locks and all schools are provided multiple two-way radios for instantaneous communication among staff.

Although we are sadly aware that these events could happen anywhere, I want everyone to know that our safety strategies are among the best and are constantly being updated and reviewed.

Emotional safety is also important, and we are fortunate to have a dedicated group of social workers, school psychologists, school adjustment counselors and guidance counselors to assist our children and their families in time of need. If you feel that you or your children need such support, I ask that you contact your school principal. We are always there for you.

The American Psychological Association has published guidance on how to talk with your children about school tragedies. That guidance can be found at <http://www.apa.org/topics/violence/school-shooting.aspx>. Please feel free to reach out to any member of our administrative team for any support you feel you may need.

With Respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catherine C. Latham".

Catherine C. Latham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools