



Administrative Office

# SUMTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

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February 20, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In light of the recent tragedy in Florida, we have received several potential threats in Sumter School District. We pledge to our students, parents, employees and the community to take any threat seriously. In all cases, we will ask law enforcement officials to help us evaluate the validity of the threat. If we identify the student(s) responsible for making a threat or perpetuating a rumor, we promise swift and strong disciplinary action and will involve law enforcement as appropriate. Students and staff must feel safe at school. It also is imperative that we all protect the educational environment.

We ask for support from our parents/guardians in the following ways: talk frequently with your children about what they are hearing and seeing at school or in the neighborhood; discuss with them the seriousness of playing a prank, teasing or spreading rumors; encourage them to report any suspicious activity to a trusted adult at school or to you; and notify the school if you hear of any potential problems or threats. Parents and students may also report information on Sprigeo, which is available on each school's website.

The first and most important priority of Sumter School District is the safety of our students and staff. Any time a tragedy like this happens, it reminds us of how precious life is and the importance of emergency procedures and proper training. Certainly in this day and age we can never be absolutely protected against all circumstances, but we do educate our students and staff throughout the year and rely on our parents to help us ensure we reinforce our own safety procedures.

Our joint emergency action plans were developed in accordance with state and federal best practices and in partnership with local public safety professionals. Law enforcement is a partner in the annual review of the plans, and they evaluate our implementation of emergency drills and provide training for school staff as requested. The review of our plans reveal strengths and weaknesses, and in some cases, procedures are revised or enhanced.

Each joint emergency action plan at the school level helps prepare school sites on lockdown drills, evacuation procedures, natural disaster precautions as well as communication with families, students, parents and communities during a crisis. School safety procedures also address the access of our buildings by the public. A variety of drills are conducted on a regular basis. Training in school safety for school staff takes place throughout the year, and the school district also provides immediate crisis response training for the Disturbance Intervention Response teams and the Mental Health Support teams.

In addition, all visitors to our schools must enter and sign in using Ident-a-Kid with the school office. Security cameras are in all of our schools, and seven resource officers serve Sumter School District.

Again, the safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority at all times in our school district. Working together, we can ensure that the educational process is allowed to continue in the safe, uninterrupted environment that our children deserve. We appreciate your continued support of a safe learning environment for students.

Sincerely,

Debra W. Hamm, Ph.D.

Interim Superintendent

*Vision - Sumter School District will educate all students to embrace diversity, act responsibly, and contribute positively in a competitive, global society.*

*Mission - The mission of Sumter School District is to equip students to be responsible, successful, and productive citizens in a global society.*

*Sumter School District is an equal opportunity employer.*