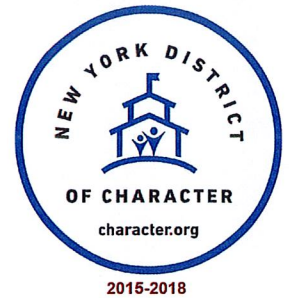




BYRON-BERGEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Office

6917 West Bergen Road
Bergen, NY 14416-9747
(585) 494-1220



Superintendent – Mickey Edwards
Business Administrator – Lori Prinz
Special Education Chairperson – Donna M. Moscicki, Ed.D.

February 16, 2018

Dear Byron-Bergen Families,

Our hearts go out to the students, families and entire community of Parkland, Florida. Another senseless, tragic, and life altering tragedy comes to a school setting. At Byron-Bergen schools, the safety of our students has always been and continues to be our first priority. Our first response to this tragedy is to strengthen our district's commitment to safety and redouble our efforts to protect our students. I recognize that our community, our parents and guardians, teachers and staff, and students are understandably concerned. We would like to meet with you to address those concerns, answer your questions, and listen to your ideas.

This is why we have scheduled a special open forum discussion on safety and security during our next Board of Education meeting. Please join us on March 1, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the Professional Development Room at the Jr./Sr. High School to be part of that conversation.

In addition, in the coming days, our SRO Matt Butler will be visiting classrooms and speaking with students at all grade levels about the many things they can do to help prevent dangerous situations. We will be working with teachers and counselors to find more ways to build trust and communication with all of our students. We will be reviewing and testing the security features in both of our schools, including our Raptor visitor management system, Rapid Responder crisis management system, and our building and grounds cameras.

I hope you will be able to attend the special forum, but if you are unable to be there, please feel free to contact me at (585) 494-1220 Ext. 2829 or at medwards@bbschools.org to share your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you.

To assist our efforts, below are a few things that you can do at home:

- Please have open conversations with your children about their worries, anxieties, and thoughts related to their sense of safety, security, and overall wellness in our schools. As you think about how that conversation may unfold, please consider the recommendations from the National Association of School Psychologists at:

<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-andcrisis/talking-to-children-about-violence-tips-for-parents-and-teachers>

If you need assistance or support, please reach out by contacting your child's principal, school counselor, or our school resource officer.



Challenge, Engage, and Nurture



- Simply, encouraging your children to express concerns that they might have about friends and classmates will also be very helpful. We are not asking students to “tattle” or turn on friends, but **it is critical that any student reach out to ask for help in supporting a friend or classmate that may be in trouble or contemplating doing harm to themselves or others.** Again, you can reach out to me, our building principals, counselors, SRO, or any other adult at the school you feel you or your child has a connection with.
- If your parental instincts tell you that there may be something concerning, it is important for you to know that there is no such thing as an overreaction in reporting concerns. **If you hear, see, or read anything, anything that doesn’t seem to be right, please report it!**
- If at any time any concern or information imminently threatens the health and safety of anyone, **please call 911.**

Thank you for making the time to consider how we can partner to keep our community a safe place for kids to learn and grow in positive and productive ways. While tragedies can happen anywhere, it is only through our collective efforts to remain vigilant, be willing to report concerns, and proactively support and challenge everyone to be their very best selves each and every day that we maintain a chance at limiting our risk to a tragedy coming to our community.

With a saddened heart,



Mickey Edwards
Superintendent

Elementary Principal – Brian Meister – 494-1220 Ext. 1005 bmeister@bbschools.org
Jr./Sr. High Principal – Pat McGee – 494-1220 Ext. 2401 pmcgee@bbschools.org
School Resource Officer – Deputy Matt Butler – 494-1220 Ext. 2304 mbutler@bbschools.org