

# WAYLAND · PUBLIC · SCHOOLS

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October 11, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Providing a safe environment for your child to learn and to grow is a top priority of the Wayland Public Schools. I would like to discuss our ongoing work to respond to the latest research on school violence embodied in the US Secret Service's July 2018 report entitled "Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing School Violence."

Most importantly, the Wayland Public School staff works to create a warm environment in which every child is noticed and supported. In this way, we hope that all of our students will feel a sense of belonging and empathy every day they go to school and will trust our teaching staff. We strive to teach them the skills they need to identify when they or a classmate is struggling. We provide a robust set of programming through Open Circle at the elementary level, TAG at the middle school, and Advisory at the high school to strengthen our children's ability to identify and develop healthy and supportive relationships with their peers. At the secondary level, through certain programs, such as Signs of Suicide, students learn about mental health challenges and supports that are in place for their classmates and themselves. Organizations like Wayland Cares provides additional emotional support for students who we identify as struggling. Finally, a Threat Assessment Team at each building composed of the school principal, school adjustment counselor, school psychologist, and other teaching staff works closely with the Wayland Police, and in particular our School Resource Officer, Shane Bowles, to ensure that concerns about students are surfaced, discussed and addressed.

At the same time, while an attack is extremely unlikely to occur, we prepare our students and staff to respond in such an instance. Officer Bowles and the Threat Assessment Teams follow the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) system, developed in response to the latest research regarding school violence. ALICE enables teachers to make decisions regarding staying in the classroom or evacuating depending on the location of an intruder. In order to provide teachers with the knowledge and confidence to make decisions, the District, Police and Fire Departments conduct annual staff trainings and students and staff participate in ALICE drills twice each year.

A final part of our work in ensuring your children's safety is making our buildings as safe as possible. This fall, the Wayland Police Department has increased its presence in all of our schools. Furthermore, in 2019-2020, we are making significant upgrades to our public address systems to ensure that staff and the police can communicate as quickly as possible during an emergency.

Thank you for your support and for your focus on the needs of our children. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have at [arthur\\_unobskey@wayland.k12.ma.us](mailto:arthur_unobskey@wayland.k12.ma.us).

Sincerely,



Arthur Unobskey, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools