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Dover City Schools

228 West Sixth Street Dover, Ohio 44622

May 24, 2022

Dear Dover Families,

The senseless act of violence and tragic loss of lives in Texas have again brought attention to school safety. We live in a strong, supportive community; however, we must continue to work collaboratively to ensure the safety of our children. As a mother and a superintendent, I wish school safety conversations did not have to happen, but there is nothing more important.

Together with law enforcement agencies and first responders, we develop and continue to revise, implement, and practice emergency procedures. The details of plans are not all openly shared to protect our staff and students. However, some of the safety measures in place at our schools include the following:

- Relationships with Dover Police Department: We have an excellent, collaborative relationship with Dover Police. They are present and visible in our schools, responding quickly to school needs and playing an integral role in our emergency response plans.
- Check-In Procedures: We have a locked, single entry point in each building where visitors are required to follow check-in procedures prior to entering the building.
- Staff Training: Our staff is trained in ALICE, active shooter response training, which encourages a multi-leveled response to violence including flight, hide/barricade, and fight. Schools conduct regular age-appropriate safety drills to practice and train students.
- SaferOhio School Tip Line: Using the confidential hotline, anyone can report concerns for student safety at 1-844-723-3764 and is information is available <u>HERE</u>.
- Mental Health Support: Our school counseling staff and community agencies work together to assist struggling students and families with mental health and behavior needs.

Despite all our procedures, emergency plans, and precautions -- relationships matter most. The relationships between staff and students, parents and children, and families and schools make a difference. We will be reinforcing our "See Something, Say Something!" efforts at school, but we hope you will do the same at home. If you hear of threats or suspicious behaviors, please see a teacher, counselor, or principal right away. Nothing is too small, and our school staff are available for our students. If something doesn't feel right, it is worth seeking out a trusted adult immediately.

Talking to your children at home, in ways that best fit your family, is important. Here are some additional resources that may be helpful as you work to support your children:

<u>Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Families and Educators</u>
<u>Helping your Children Manage Distress in the Aftermath of a Shooting</u>

We are blessed to live in a community like ours. However, it is only <u>together</u> that we maintain a safe school environment. As our hearts break and we grieve for a school community many miles away, we must remain close and care for one another. It is both an honor and responsibility to serve your children and our families; thank you for your support and trust in Dover Schools.

Sincerely,

Karie McCrate Superintendent

A Distinguished History and a Dynamic Future