

# North Haledon Public Schools

201 Squaw Brook Road • North Haledon, NJ 07508 • (973) 427-8993 (Phone) • (973) 423-1514 (Fax)

---

Nicholas Coffaro  
Superintendent of Schools

Debra Andreniuk  
Business Administrator  
Board Secretary

Date: February 23, 2018

Dear North Haledon Families:

As we continue to reflect on the horrifying events that took place last Wednesday in Parkland, FL., the North Haledon School District- in partnership with the North Haledon Police Department- wants to reassure you that the physical and emotional safety of your child/children has always been and will continue to be our number one priority. There are many facets to our school security systems, including some that are obvious (video surveillance, locked exterior doors, regular visits by the NH PD, emergency evacuation drills), and some that are not. Our School Staff and Personnel closely monitors not only the academic arena, but do monitor the mental well-being of all students, and we do not hesitate to intervene with a multitude of supports available at both Memorial School and HMS, as well as within our community.

During school hours, we regularly conduct a variety of school safety drills so that procedures and protocols are in place as to readiness. This action does allow us, as well, to be aimed at the identification of areas that may need improvement. A vital part of these measures is the reinforcement by you to your child/children as to the importance of performing these drills which may- at times- be conducted and executed in an unannounced manner. Your cooperation and understanding is recognized and appreciated. Perhaps most importantly, we rely on our entire School and Town Community to serve as “up-standers,” rather than “by-standers.”

As with HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying), school officials do investigate based upon “up-standers” who provide information or a “heads-up” as to potential occurrences. This notification has occurred in the past and must continue to occur from within both schools, as well as throughout our community. When observing behaviors that are a concern, whether via social media posts or hearing verbal statements that may be considered as outside the norm or disturbing, please communicate with respective School Principal. While we take all reports seriously, acting on a condition of anonymity and not implicating those alleged perpetrators does hurt validity as to what is being reported. For swift and timely action to occur, our investigation must be thorough which is why information you provide must be relevant and accurate as to what you are reporting. We need to be effective with our investigation and with your assistance, we can make that happen. So thank you all ahead of time!

With that being said, there may be occasions when Local and/or State law enforcement agencies may need to intervene. Case in point would be threatening statements (deemed terroristic in nature). Such threats can be deemed as, “made in jest,” or “He/She didn’t mean what they said.” My answer to these and related statements is easy: Zero-Tolerance. One cannot predict what may occur after such a threat is made. Protocol for such threats- and regardless of the level of threat- is to act swiftly and accurately. Removal of student from the premises once contact is made to the family so that a psychiatric evaluation can occur, the notification of our local police department so

the report is on file as to the threat, and drug screening of the individual who made the threat are some of the steps implemented by our school district. While I cannot speak on behalf of our Police Department and their procedures, I do know we are privileged to have such a hands-on police department who are dedicated to their craft and are sincere, caring, and genuine with their approach as to the education of our students.

There are more steps involved as to protocol and procedures, but I cannot cover all steps within this document. I do, though, want to emphasize that no student will be allowed on school property and not only during school hours, but to include after school events/activities... and this pertains to all school suspensions in general. Communication from school officials to any outside agencies will occur, and in the event a suspended student does arrive on either campus, our police department will be called upon. Yes, extreme situations call for extreme measures.

In conclusion, you can expect the North Haledon School District and its collaboration with the North Haledon Police Department to continue as we move forward. And we are not alone in this partnership. It is about community which begins with the support and leadership from our BOE, the mentoring and guidance from our staff and administration, the help from our PTO and NHEF, the assistance from Mayor George and our Town Council, the help from our Municipal Health Alliance, and- our most important stakeholders- our students and families. Together, we will continue to evolve our school safety and security procedures as we look to invest into school security upgrades. Investment also means time as we will continue to educate all via presentations (Vaping) and information assemblies/forums. As the school year progresses, I will be meeting with our BOE and various stakeholders as to revisions to policies and regulations for the enhancement of safety and security measures that could range from entry into either school (lunch drop-off for example) or appropriate student dispositions (via code of conduct).

Do know you are welcomed to schedule an appointment to meet with me anytime so that we can discuss and share. My email: [ncoffaro@nhschools.net](mailto:ncoffaro@nhschools.net).

Sincerely,

Mr. Nicholas Coffaro

Superintendent of Schools  
North Haledon School District