

December 17, 2012

Dear Parents,

I'm writing to you to respond to the elementary school shooting that took place in Newtown, Connecticut on Friday morning. The administration and staff have spent the weekend watching as more horrific details have come out over the local and national media on TV and on Twitter.

Our hearts go out to those students, teachers and principal who did not return home from school on Friday and those families and friends related to the Newtown community. We've found no words to fully capture the emotions so many of us are feeling right now.

During times like this it is only natural to think of our own children. We want to assure each of you that we share your concern over such tragedies and we are vigilant and pro-active here in the Fairfield Area School District, especially where the safety of our students and staff are concerned. We have multiple safety measures in place to help prevent these types of horrible incidences.

All staff members in our district, including teachers, administrators, and support staff are trained in emergency response procedures. We have crisis plans in place for each of our buildings to deal with emergency situations, including those similar to what occurred on Friday. We also run regular drills, including intruder drill, which helps keep the correct procedures and precautions top-of-mind for our staff. Our school district has a strong partnership with our local law enforcement officials, and we work with them closely to ensure that our schools are as safe as possible.

In the interest of home-school communication, below I will lay out our plans for today and those days to follow.

Before School: I will host an all-staff meeting to offer dialogue amongst our teaching staff and review K-12 developmentally appropriate conversation structures for our children. We will also initiate a full review of our school safety protocol in place. As a staff, we are fully invested in being comprehensive and thorough in our daily approach, and are always looking for new ways to be a better and safer school district for all.

During the School Day: Counselors and administrators in our buildings are available to help students who have been affected by Friday's shootings. If your child would like to speak to someone at school about his or her feelings, concerns or fears please let us know or encourage him or her to reach out to a trusted adult. It is critical that our students feel safe at school so they are free to learn. If your child is seen by either a guidance counselor or administrator, we will personally call you (parents) to review our conversation in the best interests of our home-school partnership. Please be advised that the details of the events in Newtown will not be discussed with any students K-12 at any

time. Details of what students are aware of are solely at the discretion of each individual family.

Please be assured that the Fairfield Area School District has the safety and best interests of your child in mind at all times. We will work together to make sure that our procedures for preventing and dealing with dangerous situations such as this are as strong as possible, and that our children are protected. Our thoughts are with the community of Newtown, Connecticut.

Sincerely,

William Chain, Superintendent