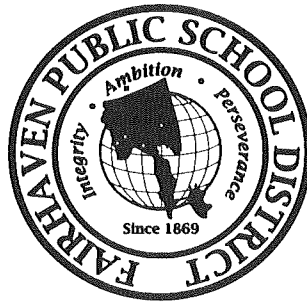


Office of the Superintendent
FAIRHAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Robert N. Baldwin, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Tara M. Kohler
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Director of Technology and Finance

February 25, 2018

Dear Fairhaven School Community,

The unthinkable continues to happen, and as a result, everyone's sense of security becomes uncertain. In today's world, no community is immune to the ills of society, and there is no 100% promise that can be made that all tragedies can be prevented. With that sense of reality in mind, I do want to assure our school community that we have procedures in place to keep our schools safe. Our schools continue to work hard at refining our building emergency preparedness plans. These plans have been developed in coordination with our local police and fire departments and their extensive training and guidance have been at the forefront of our plans. Please be assured that preparedness for emergencies has been and continues to be a top priority in your schools. While no system is flawless, a continuous review of our procedures against the most up to date strategies for dealing with emergencies is essential for ensuring the safety of our schools.

We are fortunate to have a very strong relationship between the School Department, Police Department, and Fire Department in our town. We continue to work closely with them to review existing safety protocols to determine what, if any, additional resources are needed to enhance the security of our school buildings. We also know that mental health and safety go hand in hand and that it is essential to have these services in our schools. As a district, we have made the commitment to support the mental health needs of our student population by having school psychologists, guidance and school adjustment counselors, Licensed Clinical Social workers, and Board Certified Behavioral Analysts on staff to aid in both identifying concerns and supporting students.

While I do lead the district, there are no actions that I can take that can replace getting to know your school's principal, secretarial staff, custodial staff, nurse, and teachers. Ultimately, being safer and feeling safer is about relationships. Relationships of regard and respect foster a safer school culture. The sharing and passing on of information to the proper authority is the key to prevention. These conversations and relationships that are built at the local level will promote a safer school environment. Collectively, we are all the eyes, the ears, and the voice that if we see something and/or hear something, we must pass it on.

Our close and seamless relationship with the Fairhaven Police Department aids us as we work together to track down and investigate any potential threats to our kids. Students have come to realize more and more that they play an integral role in ensuring the safety of our schools and have gotten very good about reporting any disturbing statements or threats made by their peers online. This is essential and every report will be and is investigated.

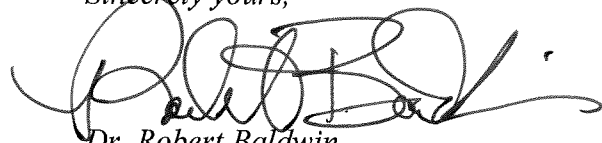
Unfortunately, situational awareness is now an essential life skill as events in the recent past have proven that dangers are not confined to our schools. We will continue to train our faculty and staff so that should the unthinkable occur, we will be as prepared as possible. We will continue to communicate with staff and students so that they are prepared to respond, but not so that they live in fear.

As parents it can be difficult to speak with children about tragedies such as these. This link from the American Psychological Association provides useful and practical help: <http://www.apa.org/topics/violence/school-shooting.aspx>. It is important to emphasize that although there are dangerous people in the world we cannot let fear define and control us.

We must work together to make our schools and community a safer place. Nothing is more important than the safety of our students and we will take all the necessary precautions to ensure the schools remain a secure environment to learn and grow.

Don't take any day for granted. Hug your children a little tighter and be vigilant with us to make our schools and community safer.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Robert Baldwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "B".

*Dr. Robert Baldwin
Superintendent of Schools*