

Sayreville Public Schools
Educating Today's Learners to Be Tomorrow's Leaders

Sayreville Board of Education
Sayreville, New Jersey

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Dr. Frank R. Alfano,
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) which is my professional organization has created a document called the **ABC's of School Safety** to help you spread the word that school administrators are dedicated to making sure schools remain safe learning environments for all students, and that the overwhelming majority of schools are safe and nurturing places for students.

ABC's of School Safety

We at Sayreville are deeply saddened by the events at schools in Pennsylvania, Colorado and Wisconsin. These terrible incidents serve as a reminder that violence can happen anywhere, and schools must remain prepared to respond. These incidents also underscore the challenge of protecting students and staff in our free and open society. Overwhelmingly, schools are safe and nurturing places for students, and school administrators are dedicated to making sure schools remain safe learning environments for all students. This AASA and Sayreville document below outlines some elements of school safety, organized under three categories: Awareness, Balance and Control.

Awareness

Schools must remain aware of the threat of violence on campus and vigilant about protecting the safety of students. Particularly since the Columbine school shootings of 1999, Sayreville Schools have implemented comprehensive and integrated school safety and emergency response plans to minimize the threat of school-based shootings.

Please note that all of our schools frequently review and update their school safety and emergency response plans to ensure they meet current needs. Our School Emergency Plans continue to make students, parents and staff aware of school safety and emergency response plans.

Our schools continue to train students and staff on safety protocols and warning signs. With heightened awareness, our school community will be better equipped to respond to—and, when possible, minimize or prevent—a crisis.

Balance

Schools should take a balanced approach to school safety, recognizing that a combination of strategies, rather than one or two extreme solutions, can be most effective in keeping students safe. To this end Sayreville's School Safety Plan includes "human connection" initiatives such as fostering information sharing, support networks, peer relationship building, counseling and parental involvement. Such efforts help our students feel connected to school, to their teachers and to each other. The benefit of such a safety process is an increased ability to recognize and report security concerns.

Sayreville Schools balance the need to secure school facilities with the need to maintain an open space for learning. As administrative school leaders we continue to remind the public that our schools are overwhelmingly safe environments for all of our children. However, at Sayreville we must and will continue these efforts to make schools a safer place.

Control

Schools need to control access to the learning environment. Schools nationwide have made campus safety a priority. Schools must continue to implement school safety controls.

Here at Sayreville, our school safety efforts take into account the features of the school and the surrounding community. Safety measures at Sayreville include hiring school safety officers, maintaining a strong school visitor policy, limiting school entry points and conducting periodic emergency response drills.

Finally, I can assure you that we as a district are doing everything possible to keep our staff and students safe. We can only hope and pray that no other school or community is harmed and affected by random violence.

Thank you as always for your continued support and cooperation and if you have questions regarding school safety, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Alfano, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Board of Education Members
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