



Fort Campbell High School

Mr. Mohan Vaswani, Principal
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Dear Parents:

In the aftermath of the tragic events that unfolded in Newtown, CT at Sandy Hook ES on December 14, 2012, we know that many of you are concerned about your child's safety at school. These heartbreaking situations are sad, unfortunate reminders that bad things can and do happen in environments whose mission is to nurture, protect and care for our most valuable resource – our children. We must always be mindful of and dedicated to working together to keep our children safe. Events such as these have focused our attention on developing, implementing and reviewing crisis plans in our schools. We are also mindful of the need for constant vigilance in preventing tragedies before they happen and coping with the unthinkable should it happen.

Students have been talking about the incident as you can imagine. Our teachers and support staff have been wonderful! They have listened, reassured, and nurtured. We are working hard to maintain the routines of school here at Fort Campbell High School.

I would like to share some things that you should know about safety and security in our schools.

- Our school maintains an emergency response and evacuation plan. This plan is updated on an annual basis, exercised and coordinated with the local command.
- All schools practice drills in order to be prepared for an emergency.
- Our administrators and support personnel observe visitors to the school and monitor hallways and campus activity.
- DoDEA has adopted a nationwide program titled "Safe Schools" program. Its primary objective is to increase the capacity of principals, staff members, and community members to identify and address internal problems that threaten school safety and security.
- DoDEA has serious consequences for students who bring guns, knives, drugs, or alcohol to school.
- An Internet filtering software system is in place that makes student access to inappropriate web sites highly unlikely.
- When we find students exhibiting seriously inappropriate behavior (e.g., suicide ideation, verbalizing threats, or fantasizing violent action), referrals are made to the appropriate mental health professionals or Family Advocacy.
- We maintain an effective relationship with local military police.
- School officials are able - when in possession of relevant information - to take appropriate action, provide help to a troubled student or adult and ensure a safe school environment for all students. School officials nurture open communications with students about school safety.
- FCHS has a very active Student Support Team composed of mental health professionals that look for students who need support either academically or emotionally.

Parents need to stay in constant communication with children about anything unusual they hear or observe at school. With parents and educators working together, we will maintain an environment conducive to effective student learning and safety.

We are also sharing with you some strategies developed by the National PTA you could use to help your children understand recent events and cope with their feelings.

- Maintain your composure. Children model behavior.
- Reassure your children that they're safe.
- Keep to your normal routines. Children need a sense of stability.
- Talk about the tragedy in an age-appropriate manner. Be patient. It's common for children to ask the same questions about death and disaster over and over.
- Help children to express their feelings. If they don't know the words to say how they feel inside, try to help them put their feelings into words and/or use creative ways of communicating, such as through art, writing or music.
- Listen. Ask questions.
- Make yourself available. Your children may need extra attention from you. Make time for them.
- Explain that there are people who hate for different reasons, and that hatred is never acceptable.
- Tell your children you love them, and offer plenty of hugs and kisses.

Should you have any concerns about student safety or security, don't hesitate to call me at 270-640-1219.

Sincerely,

Mohan Vaswani
Principal