



WELLS-OGUNQUIT
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 17, 2012

Dear WOCSD Parents, Staff and Community Members,

On behalf of the School Committee, I will begin by saying this is a letter I never thought I would have to write, and I know you believe it is one I did not want to write. The events that took place in Newtown, Connecticut on Friday have touched everyone. It is especially troubling that most of the individuals were so young. That is not supposed to happen, yet it did.

As a school system, the Superintendent was in touch with administrators over the weekend to plan for Monday morning and beyond. They each met with their safety teams this morning to review plans and security procedures, and staff was informed of how to respond as well. The Police Chief was also involved and we have stepped up the police presence at all our schools this week. The Director of York County Emergency Preparedness and the Superintendent also conferred and resources were made available.

On a student level, our counseling teams were available for students or staff who needed to talk, and they as well as the rest of the staff will continue to monitor reactions. We know effects of tragic news such as this can appear a few weeks after the initial information.

You should know we have well developed plans in place and we regularly drill them, similar to how fire drills are conducted. We are aware that our Junior High did not have a monitoring system for the single entry point during the day. That has been temporarily remedied with the presence of a person while we meet with security experts to implement a system. The elementary school has a buzzer system and the high school has the single entry door monitored by a staff member.

As we go through the rest of this school year we are clearly aware of our responsibility to keep our students – your children – and staff safe. We will do everything possible to ensure student and staff safety.

We are also aware that we have a responsibility to provide a routine and predictable school day for our children, something experts remind us is the best way to help them come to terms with tragedy. We will be doing that today and throughout the coming weeks and months.

If you have specific questions, please contact the Superintendent or building administrator so they can answer them.

I know our communities will join in supporting one another during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Russell P. Fox
WOCSD School Committee Chair