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LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT 158



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"Putting the Children First with a Commitment to Continuous Improvement"

April 5, 2023

STATEMENT OF SCHOOL SAFETY

Dear **#158Strong** Community,

It is with a heavy heart that I once again write to our constituents and express sorrow regarding a school shooting. Our hearts go out to the families of those who lost their lives during the recent tragedy at Covenant School in Nashville. Since Columbine in 1999, there have been 377 school shootings and more than 349,000 students have been exposed to gun violence. I would like to take an opportunity to remind our community about safety measures at District 158 schools, as well as new initiatives being established.

- All of our schools have secure vestibules with double sets of locking doors. Police have confirmed that the entrances of our buildings are very secure. As an additional precaution, a safety audit of all schools is being conducted by police over Spring Break to identify potential areas that need more security.
- Emergency police, fire, and medical alarms are installed in all of our buildings that call immediately to first responders. These buttons are being added inside the new Lester Crawl Primary Center as well.
- All officers of the Lansing Police Department (LPD) have access to District 158 schools. In the event of an emergency, officers are able to immediately enter any door of our facilities and address incidents.
- A full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) is employed and stationed in District 158. Det. Lewis is a certified school safety instructor, former marine, and has completed advanced training on addressing school shootings. The SRO is specifically staffed, trained, and equipped to handle these situations.
- T. F. South High School's SRO – Det. Bogan – and our former Traffic Safety Officer – Lt. Tatgenhorst – are regularly available as backups to support Det. Lewis as needed. The LPD also remains on-call to handle incidents in our schools, including the assignment of both uniformed and undercover officers.
- District 158 administrators are certified as school safety instructors, and staff in every building have completed annual drills and scenarios with police on best practices in responding to school shootings. This includes a variety of different strategies and techniques to address these types of crisis situations.
- New high-definition video cameras have been installed in our schools and all students utilize clear backpacks. District 158 is also looking into the possibility of metal detectors for additional security.

- Additional social worker positions have been and continue to be added in our schools to support student social, emotional, and mental health issues. Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) Teams have also been active this year in leading initiatives to improve and support student behavior.

Our Board of Education is proactive in exploring further means to keep our schools, students, and staff safe and most recently adopted new policy to add Behavior Threat Assessment Teams at each of our schools. If you have safety suggestions, feel free to share with the administrator of your child's school. We wish our families an enjoyable rest of Spring Break and send our condolences to the Covenant School community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan S. Schilling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Nathan S. Schilling, CSBO
Superintendent of Schools
Lansing School District 158