

SOUTH BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Scott Feder
Superintendent of Schools

David E. Pawlowski
Business Administrator/ Board
Secretary



Jennifer K. Diszler, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum, Instruction and Administration

Kimberly Maloy-White
Assistant Superintendent for Human
Resources

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Dear South Brunswick Community,

As we see the year coming to a close, health and safety remains at the forefront as we reflect back on the past week's recent events related to weapons in schools along with the continued struggle and spike in cases with regard to Covid. I am writing to you today to once again address our health and safety measures. I would be remiss if I didn't say that our thoughts go out to the victims and community impacted by this latest and tragic school shooting at Oxford High School.

Since the Michigan incident last week, there have been multiple incidents locally including the incident in Lawrence, where a student brought a loaded gun into their High School. We also had a situation where a student shared something of concern and we were able to immediately intervene and resolve the issue. One thing that recent cases had in common was that they were all reported to school staff and/or local Police Departments and any crisis was averted. It is imperative to stress to you to please talk to your children and let them know if they see or hear anything unusual or threatening to come forward and let a parent and/or staff member know so we can continue to address any students in crisis and be proactive in our approach to safety. Please encourage your children that if they "see something, say something."

Our district will continue to work towards the prevention of violence through preparedness, education and training. Commitment to school safety is a daily endeavor. Through daily planning and security drills along with working together with the South Brunswick Police Department as well as maintaining positive, open lines of communication with our students, we will continue to do everything possible to maintain a safe school environment. The South Brunswick Police Department has shared with us that they have increased their patrols to our school buildings. More officers will be seen in our lots and possibly walking through the buildings. We are sharing this not to cause alarm, but just to make you aware. Their goal is to be proactive as to prevent or even mitigate an incident in the first place.

The school district will not shy away from addressing safety concerns raised by students, staff or the community. We also are often made aware of social media posts and take them very seriously and will involve the police when necessary, but also will not hesitate to investigate to the fullest extent of our ability, concerns to which we are made aware. Safety over the last 20 months has usually been associated with health safety, but know that while we have added focus and staffing to Covid related matters, we have also added additional staff and continue to focus on other safety matters including drills, entrance security and ensuring that our schools are safe environments for all. This is a constant focus and one that has certainly been heightened by recent events.

For those that are not aware, we employ a Safety and Compliance Officer, Mr. James Conroy, who prior to coming to us, was the Chief of Police for East Brunswick. Mr. Conroy leads a team of school district security officers that work with him and are housed in all of our secondary schools in concert with SBPD staff. We could not be more fortunate to have someone of his expertise and caliber working and leading our staff in all things safety. Student, staff and community safety remain our highest priority and this will not change!

On another note, as we are in the midst of the holiday season where we find ourselves spending more time with loved ones outside of our immediate households, I just wanted to share with you some health related reminders. If you have been following our [Covid Dashboard](#) you will notice a rise in our daily student positives along with an uptick in our newly quarantined students.

I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to keep your child home if he/she is sick, if he/she has been Covid tested and is waiting for the results, or if your child or family has had exposure to a known positive person. By keeping your child home, you can avoid a student outbreak in our classrooms. We follow the NJDOH guidelines which state that, "During outbreaks, regardless of community transmission levels, close contacts for individuals with Covid-19 who are not fully vaccinated should be excluded for 14 days from the dates of last contact. In order to help mitigate any spread, we ask that you always be vigilant and be on the lookout for signs and symptoms of Covid-19 in your child as well as anyone living in the home and to keep your child home when he/she isn't feeling well. Please refer to the [SBSD Parent FAQ](#) for further guidance.

The following are resources that we thought might serve as some good reminders:

[NJDOH COVID-19 Information for Communities and the General Public](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Information](#)

[Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

[Testing](#)

[How to Protect Yourself](#)

[What to Do if You Are Sick](#)

I remind you that the CDC recommends everyone ages 5 and older get the Covid-19 vaccine to help protect against Covid-19. We know that vaccination is a personal decision as stressed in my [communication home on November 9th](#). Please [Click here](#) for more information on vaccines for children and teens.

Your partnership has made it possible to keep our students safe and healthy during this difficult time and I call on you to continue in this effort. The health and well-being of our students and staff along with everyone's safety is of the utmost importance to us here in South Brunswick and we hope that by continuing to partner with you we can continue to achieve this goal.

Be well,



Scott