



School Administrative Unit No. 21

Hampton Falls · North Hampton · Seabrook · South Hampton · Winnacunnet Cooperative

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Dear SAU 21 School Communities:

Recent events in Florida and too many other states have certainly been a catalyst for all of us to reflect on what is important to us *and* for school communities to continue to be proactive and responsive to safety concerns. The victims and their families have our deepest sympathy in these times of tragic losses. It is devastating for all of us, as these types of horror in schools have become much too common. These sobering events offer an opportunity for legislatures to be mindful and act on all attempts to improve safety for our children, as they are so rightfully insisting all adults to do.

At SAU 21, we are sensitive to heightened concerns and fears in our schools and communities. We are all working together to constantly ask:

- Are our schools as safe as possible?
- What are we doing to protect our students and staff?
- What information is important to share and respond to student questions and anxieties?

We have long held the belief and put into action the concept that the safety of our students, staff, and families is our number one priority. Administration participates in trainings with our local public safety officials to include the Department of Homeland Security. A variety of safety drills are conducted in our schools to generate data to help us review our practices and protocols for efficiency and reflect on our efforts for maximum safety.

As an SAU, we will continue to assess best practices, have budgeted for responsive safety upgrades, and applied for and are receiving infrastructure grants specifically targeting building safety needs. We continue to consider the newest ideas and research-based approaches to training and response options in emergency scenarios. All of our schools received School Safety and Security reports over the past few years, and we are responding to the recommendations with the support of State sponsored grants and our district budgets. There are on-going resources and workshops for administrators and schools through the [School Safety and Facility Management Bureau](#). Our safety drills and planning practices have been in place for over a decade, and we continue to revise them as new recommendations and research arises while collaborating with local safety agencies.

In addition, we continue to emphasize the social emotional health of our students in partnership with parents and families. Please visit our [website](#) to access resources that may be useful as you navigate your conversations and educate your child(ren) in response to these challenging tragedies. Of particular interest and pertinence are suggestions by the [American Psychological Association](#).

It is most important that all community members and children who visit our schools have confidence in the safety of SAU 21 facilities. Your patience, support, and understanding are always appreciated as we continue to evolve in our safety practices and emphasize strong and secure educational environments. We are here to partner with you and collaborate in our efforts with sincere wishes for the health and welfare of everyone. Thank you for all that you do to support us, and feel free to contact your district administrators if you need additional information or resources.

Sincerely,

SAU 21 Leadership

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