

“COMMITTED TO HIGH PERFORMANCE”

ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Superintendent of Schools Issues Statement on District's Preparation, Preparedness & Prevention Plans

JONESBORO—*Superintendent of Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS), Dr. Morcease J. Beasley, issues the following statement on what CCPS is doing as a school system to remain vigilant, raise community awareness and share our response to the horrific incident that took place in Parkland, Florida.*

“We are saddened by the news of what happened in Parkland, Florida on Wednesday, February 14. I believe it is important to continuously create a culture of proactive awareness that assures a positive climate exists wherein all students and employees feel safe. It is imperative to build a positive, healthy relationship with our students—one that allows students and adults to share and exchange critical information at all times. This notice assures our community that we *are not* afraid, but rather, highly mindful that this tragedy could have easily occurred in our county and/or within the state of Georgia.

Our prayers go out to the families who lost members or have injured loved ones through this senseless act of violence. Know that, though we are hundreds of miles apart, we stand beside you, we support you in this hour of grief.

This unfortunate incident serves as a costly reminder that we should be ever vigilant with regard to our children, the places they go and the activities in which they engage. This is a very complex situation with so many contributing variables that are consistently and prevalently occurring in our country.

It reminds us as a community that we must protect our children as we teach them how to think critically, and we must unite together to address complex issues even when there's no relief, support, or answers beyond the State and Federal levels. As a community we must also identify ways to take this matter into our own lawful hands to protect our children. And, make no mistake, we will do what is necessary to protect our children in Clayton County. All schools should be a non-threatening place of teaching and learning where children should be able to study, research, expand limits and rely on a support system that will help them grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Therefore, please know that out of care, concern, and caution, we will continue to review our Safe School Plan for improvements. Also, we will continue to meet with school leadership and employees to work in collaboration with our Safety and Security Division and all School Resource Officers (SROs) and security personnel to ensure readiness, initiate proactive actions and foster good community relations as preventive measures.

As educators, we will do everything in our power to protect our children and to ensure that they and our employees have a safe environment to teach and to learn. While we are doing this, we encourage families to partner with us in protecting our school community. We cannot do this alone. This must be a community effort. Our children are our most precious investments, and we must work together as local citizens to take a proactive approach to prevent tragedies such as the one that occurred this week from happening in Clayton County or in school systems across this nation and around the world.

Again, our hearts, thoughts and prayers go out to the victims, their families and the community of Parkland. Clayton County Public Schools stands with you in support during this devastating time. As reassurance to our local stakeholders, we have highlighted the following action steps in relation to the school district's emergency plans.”

Clayton County Public Schools Safety Awareness Campaign

As we continue to keep a watchful eye on our schools, Clayton County Public Schools will continue to examine and utilize the following safety and preventive measures to ensure our schools reflect the highest level of safety measures.

- Offer refresher courses and send reminders to principals as well as school personnel regarding safety and security protocols/procedures including, but not limited to active shooter and lockdown procedures and other safety drills. In addition to making sure that all school personnel are familiar with our Safe School Plan and emergency preparedness kits as approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
- Review, modify and reconstruct procedures, as needed, to ensure school safety procedures are aligned with the most up to date information as determined by CCPS Safety and Security Division as well as monitor, update and/or replace, as needed, security equipment at all schools and programs.
- Address the culture and climate within our schools to improve student/adult relationships to make sure that adults are modeling appropriate behaviors to students in order to nurture our circle of support and increase positive interaction among students, teachers, staff, school administrators, volunteers and community members.
- Review, update and/or revise, when necessary, visitor entry security protocols on all school campuses and district facilities.
- Utilize and promote the following strategies, initiatives, or programs already in progress to engage students and stakeholders:
 - ❖ Anti-Bullying Campaigns
 - ❖ Expand Circle of Support
 - ❖ Lions of Justice Mentoring Program
 - ❖ My Brother's Keeper Male Mentoring Program
 - ❖ Expansion of Mentoring Programs
 - ❖ Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
 - ❖ Expansion of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)
 - ❖ See Something/ Say Something Video and Tip Line
 - ❖ Restorative Justice Practices
 - ❖ Social-Emotional Learning
 - ❖ Resilience Awareness and Training

- Increase marketing efforts to highlight security/preventative measures:
 - ❖ Work in collaboration with district leaders, school administrators, teachers, employees, and community partners.
 - ❖ Explore the addition of an active shooter emergency app as part of the school awareness campaign.
 - ❖ Encourage parents to download Infinite Campus App along with CCPS Mobile App.
 - ❖ Invite employees, students, and parents to routinely communicate for proactive/preventive purposes.
 - ❖ Utilize the Superintendent's Video Updates to remind all of the actions that contribute to a positive, safe, and respectful culture and climate.
 - ❖ Infuse our curriculum with opportunities for students to think critically toward identifying solutions, while also becoming politically engaged, for local, state, national, or global issues that affect their lives.

Moving forward, we will continue to add additional safety measures as deemed appropriate to make sure Clayton County Public Schools operates with a safe and secure learning/working/volunteering environment that will promote our district's rise to high performance.

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