

April 27, 2017

Greetings from Superintendent of Park County School District #1, Kevin Mitchell:

I have been working closely with our Safety team and in particular School Resource Officer, Jason Pellegrino and District Safety Manager, Andy MaGill. We want to take some time to share some new safety and security procedures that we have implemented in the district and introduce some training that will be offered to the staff and students in the near future.

We live in a very different and sometimes dangerous world than we were ten or twenty years ago. It seems every time we watch the news, turn on the TV or browse social media, we are seeing so many critical incidents such as active shooters in our schools, places of worship and our work places. These kind of events can happen here and already have in our state. These incidents have brought about new ways of thinking, training, and situational awareness to prepare for the worst that we might face. We will never stop the evil completely in the world. We can however train ourselves and our children on how to respond and minimize the injuries or death that could happen if someone decides to act on that evil. Schools have been a target over the years mostly because of the mass numbers of people gathered in one place and usually preoccupied. I think a crucial part of any of the school security policies or procedures is keeping our parents informed, having the support of our parents and parents having regular conversations with our children about such incidents and what we should do during those times.

THE STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL (SRP)

One of the main components of one of our emergency procedures for PCSD#1 is a protocol called The Standard Response Protocol or SRP. This protocol gives us a uniform district wide response to any incident such as weather events, fires, accidents, intruders and other threats to student and staff safety.

SRP IS ACTION BASED

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based not on individual scenarios but on the response to any given situation. SRP has standardized vocabulary that staff, students, parents and first responders can understand and know what the status of the event is. This will also benefit our children as they grow up in Powell and move up through the grades and schools in our district by not having to learn something different each time. Parents can easily understand the practices and can reinforce the protocol.

Please familiarize yourselves with the four actions listed below. Knowledge of these is the key to minimizing frustration and confusion during any use of these actions during an incident or training.

- Lockout is followed by the Directive: "Secure the Perimeter" and is the protocol used to safeguard students and staff within the building.
- Lockdown is followed by "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight" and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep students quiet and in place.
- Evacuate is always followed by a location, and is used to move students and staff from one location to a different location in or out of the building.
- Shelter is always followed by a type and a method and is the protocol for group and self-protection.

These specific actions can act as both a verb and a noun. If the action is Lockdown, it would be announced on public address as "Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight." Communication to local Law Enforcement Agency would then be "We are under Lockdown." Each response has specific student and staff action. The Evacuate response is always followed by a location: "Evacuate to the Bus Zone." Responses can also be combined: "Evacuate to Hallway; Shelter for Tornado; Drop, Cover and Hold."

LOCKOUT VS. LOCKDOWN

The differentiation between Lockout and Lockdown is a critical element in SRP.

Lockout recovers all staff and students from outside the building, secures the building perimeter and locks all outside doors. This would be implemented when there is a threat or hazard outside of the building. Criminal activity, the police working on an incident nearby, dangerous events in the community, or even a vicious dog on the playground would be examples of a Lockout response. This response allows for educational practices to continue with little classroom interruption or distraction. Essentially it will be business as usual inside the building with no worries about anything inside. Nobody is to come in or go out of the building during this action. Posters will be placed on the main doors to notify anyone coming up to the building that the school is in a Lockout and that there will be no access granted to protect everyone inside the building from any potential harm or threat from outside. This is also good information for parents driving by or approaching the building to know that there is no threat to anyone inside the building.

Lockdown is a classroom-based protocol that requires locking the classroom door, turning off the lights and placing students out of sight of any corridor windows. Student action during Lockdown is to remain quiet. It does not mandate locking outside doors. There are several reasons for not locking perimeter doors during a Lockdown. Risk is increased to students or staff in exposed areas attempting to lock outside doors. Locking outside doors inhibits entry of first responders and increases risk as responders attempt to breach doors. If a school is doing a lockdown drill a poster will be hanging at the main doors as well notifying you of the drill. There will be no access permitted during this time.

We would ask on behalf of the school district and Law Enforcement that in the event of these actions, specifically Lockdown and Lockout that you as parents and a community would not come to the school. This will be hard to do and I understand as a parent myself. There are many reasons for this with the

main one being mass chaos and confusion. In an extreme case such as an active shooter we do not want more potential casualties from the incident and it will also interfere with first responders that are in place or responding to the crisis. Each school has designated evacuation sites as well as reunification sites for families and their students to be reunified.

In the future we will also be implementing some training to staff and students on individual specific responses in the event of an active shooter.

Thank you for your time and allowing us to serve you and your children as the Safety Team for Park County School District #1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kevin Mitchell
Superintendent