



Franklin Public Schools - Responding to Reports of a Threat

October 2021

Dear Franklin Community,

As noted in the recent presentation about [School Safety](#) at the October 12 School Committee meeting, Franklin Public Schools (FPS) is committed to ensuring a safe and nurturing educational environment for our students, staff, and community. We often experience our students and families exercising the "see it-say it" aspect of our safety protocols, and we thank you for that. We wish to emphasize the importance of this and urge families and students to reach out to us as soon as concerns arise. It reflects on the positive relationships and supportive culture of our schools.

FPS has developed threat assessment protocols and established threat assessment teams at each school represented by the school administration, a school resource officer, central office administration, a school adjustment counselor and/or school psychologist, local law enforcement, and other appropriate school personnel. These protocols were created collaboratively with the Franklin Police Department.

We wish to share an overview of our district approach upon learning of potentially threatening comments, conduct, behavior, or circumstances that could impact our school community to provide you with more information, to the extent feasible.

Threat Assessment Protocol

Whenever a school and/or the district receives a report of an alleged threat, our threat assessment protocol is enacted. Our school administrators immediately notify the Franklin Police Department and members of the threat assessment team to investigate and determine the validity of the alleged threat and the risk it poses based on all of the information available at that time. If the threat is initially reported to the Franklin Police Department, the FPD will share information with the District, when feasible.

Based on the facts determined from the investigation, the school administrators, in conjunction with the Franklin Police Department, will take appropriate remedial action. Appropriate steps may include additional supervision, therapeutic interventions (counseling; further evaluation), safety and support plans, and disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

Communication

With each potential threat, we follow our assessment protocol; however, each situation is treated as a unique and individual circumstance requiring case-specific determinations. Our ability to provide answers to all of your questions is limited, in part because of laws protecting the privacy rights of the individuals involved. It is the District's intent to provide as much information as legally permitted by law, while not compromising the

integrity of any internal or criminal investigation. We are weighing the benefit of assuring the safety of the community with the privacy rights of individuals involved.

In most cases, the community, the teachers, and students do not have access to the full knowledge regarding the details of events. This may cause misinformation to circulate. We are sharing background information about our protocols and our communication with the hopes that families will refer back to school-issued information rather than relying on other sources.

At all times, we encourage you to reach out to building administrators with concerns and questions. Our counselors are available to support students in helping them feel safe at school.

Overview of General FPS Safety Practices Currently Implemented

The safety and well-being of Franklin students and staff are our highest priority. Our buildings remain locked and well-supervised when school is in session. All visitors must check in at the main office upon arrival and present identification. Organizations that use our facilities after hours are required to have a door monitor that supervises the entry and exit of guests to our buildings.

Security cameras provide coverage around all of our buildings. Additionally, we have a capital plan in place to upgrade and add to our security cameras and other security features to enhance coverage. We have open communication with the Franklin Fire and Police Departments, and our response teams regularly review and practice safety protocols and procedures. We continue to refine our practices through ongoing education and the establishment of best practices within the field of school safety. In the 2018-19 school year, the entire faculty and staff across the District engaged in deeper training with experts in the field, based on new information and practices. We will continue to reinforce this training in 2021-2022 and will do so in the upcoming years.

We also stress climate and culture in each of our schools, centering our work around core values and relationships. It is important that each student feels connected to an adult, and we strive to ensure we have supports in place to help students in crisis. We value students taking an active part in establishing and maintaining a safe school culture through leadership and citizenship. We emphasize the importance of speaking up when there is a concern.

We hope that this resource is helpful to you in understanding more about our safety and security protocols and brings a measure of reassurance of our practices. We are always looking to improve both our practices and our communication.

Respectfully,

Franklin Public Schools

This overview is generalized to preserve a level of operational security for the school district and law enforcement.