

**Michael G. Leichliter, Ed.D.
Superintendent
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Dear Parents,

As a school administrator, I have experienced a number of school tragedies, starting with Columbine in 1999. I was again horrified this week as details unfolded from yet another shooting, this time in Parkland, Florida. The senseless tragedy is particularly disturbing as it seems that our society is becoming numb to these types of tragic events. Recognizing that parents and children in our community may have conflicting feelings and questions regarding school district procedures and available resources, I share the following thoughts.

First, it is important for you to know that all our buildings are locked during the school day, and all visitors must be admitted by office staff. In addition, Penn Manor regularly reviews and revises procedures to make our schools a safe place for children to learn. All of our school buildings have a security plan and safety procedures that are practiced and reviewed with students and staff. While it is clear that there are no absolute guarantees for safety, we continue to improve security procedures, practice emergency responses, and learn from tragic events like the one in Parkland, Florida.

Penn Manor has participated in a number of federal, state, and local grants and programs during recent years to improve our ability to provide a safe environment for students and staff. Most recently, the district has adopted school evacuation procedures recommended by state and national organizations that specialize in safety. The district also receives consultative services from John Baker, safety and security officer from our local educational Intermediate Unit 13. Additionally, many of our school counselors and building administrators have received training from national crisis expert Cheri Lovre, the director of the Crisis Management Institute. She has worked with schools and communities that have experienced similar tragedies and offers excellent guidelines for talking with children about the school shooting. We have posted these guidelines along with other resources on our school district website at <http://www.pennmanor.net>. I trust that you will find these resources to be helpful.

Additionally, if your child is upset or has questions, please encourage him/her to speak with his/her teacher or school counselor. We have school counselors, social workers and psychologists in our schools to help. Additionally, this incident reminds all of us to be vigilant and to immediately report to local law enforcement any suspicious activity in and around our community and school buildings.

As an educator and parent of a current Penn Manor student and two Penn Manor graduates, I am reminded by this incident of the important work of our schools in this community. We will all continue to work diligently to help our children cope with this tragedy. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Michael G. Leichliter, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

