Greetings Westerly Creek Families

This morning Department of Safety conducted a Lockdown Drill for Westerly Creek. Today’s drill is one that each school in the district must take part in, and was not announced by the department because it served as an opportunity for them to provide us feedback based on how reactive our building is when these occurrences take place.  Melissa Craven who serves as the Head of Emergency Management at the district level was here to conduct the Lockdown drill and commended Westerly Creek for how quickly we were able to respond, how well students and staff adhered to the "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight" directive that’s given during lockdowns, and the overall security of the building.  We are providing some helpful information below that outlines lockdowns, lockouts, and what to do in the event that the school is placed on an actual lockdown.

**What is a lockdown and What is a lockout?**

A lockdown takes place where a hazardous threat or a possible hazardous threat has been identified inside of the building or in close proximity of the school. All exterior doors are locked and students and staff are confined to their school. No entry or exit to the school is allowed during lockdown procedures. A lockout takes place when a threat has been identified in the area of your child’s school. All exterior doors are locked to prevent any hazards or threats to enter the school. No entry or exit to the school is allowed during this response.

**What should I do if a lockdown is occurring at my child’s school?**

If you are notified of a school lockdown at your child’s school, do not come to the school. Stay in a location where you are able to be notified with additional information of your child’s school situation. Students will not be released until the incident has ended or the scene is safe for release. If the hazardous threat has impacted the school site in any possible way, students will be taken to a reunification site. Parents will be notified and will be able to retrieve their students from the designated reunification site. If the hazardous threat has not impacted the school site, students will be released from school as normal. In the event of an actual lockdown, communication will be sent via robo call, email, or the primary means of communication you indicated to receive correspondence during registration. As a reminder, please ensure that if any of your contact information has changed to update it with the front office staff.

We debriefed with the Department of Safety afterwards and they clarified a few other things for us.  Signage, will no longer be placed on the doors during lockdowns, as the priority is making sure everyone in the school gets to a safe place as quickly as possible.  Any students or parents that are outside when the lockdown is called, can be swept into the building and gathered into the nearest safe place.  Parents and students outside when the lockdown is called do not have to come in if they don't want to, but once the doors are shut they will not be opened for anyone. If the lockdown is called, while students are outside, students will be gathered as quickly as possible and will be taken to the nearest safe place.

Although this was just a drill, we also understand that these situations can be very alarming. As a school, we will ensure we continue to talk with all students so they understand why these drills are necessary. In addition, please debrief with your student to address any fears, questions or concerns they may have. Should you have questions or concerns regarding this information, please reach out to a member of our school administration team.

Best Regards,

Brian L. Tarver, Dean of Students

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