



August 2019

Dear Ellington Family -

The school administration works with Ellington Board of Education and staff, various Town of Ellington emergency management and law enforcement employees, and outside state agencies to improve the safety and security of the Ellington Public Schools (EPS). The following is an update regarding a portion of that progress.

Coordinated Response to Trauma

As communicated in May 2019, the school administration has been working cooperatively with the Town of Ellington to address how we collectively capture the community's human spirit to support one another in the wake of a national or local tragedy.

To begin, a shared web page focusing on resources for traumatic events is being developed. The resources will be both preventative and in response to an individual, group or community processing trauma. Topics may include, but are not limited to, drug abuse, domestic violence, suicide prevention, loss of a loved one and human trafficking.

The web page will launch September 2019. You may direct any questions to Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services - klaporte@ellingtonschools.net.

Student Training - Run / Hide / Fight

As communicated in February 2019, EPS adopted the Run-Hide-Fight philosophy as one measure to address a low probability, but high impact active shooter event. Over the past several months, teachers and staff engaged in discussions with the Connecticut State Police to better understand the philosophy.

Run-Hide-Fight curriculum will be implemented by teachers with students during the Fall of 2019. Parents who wish to review the curriculum and provide input prior to discussions with students will have the opportunity by attending informational sessions that will be scheduled in mid to late October.

You may direct any questions to Mr. Brian Hendrickson, Assistant Superintendent - bhendrickson@ellingtonschools.net.

Armed School Security

This past school year, EPS increased their commitment from two part-time School Resource Officers (SROs) to full-time status. SROs are armed police officers wearing the traditional uniform. The SROs are assigned to cover all five schools with one primarily stationed at Ellington High School.

Also, this past year, EPS created a new position - School Security Officer (SSO). The SSO provides various safety and security services in coordination with the school administration and SROs at Ellington High School. This past school year, the SSO was not armed. The current SSO is Michele Landry, a former twenty year veteran Vernon Police Officer.

Over the past ten months, the school administration worked with the Ellington Board of Education and Sergeant Brian Santa of the Ellington Resident Troopers in consultation with legal counsel to develop policies and protocols to enable the SSO to be armed for the start of the 2019 - 2020 school year or shortly thereafter. The SSO will be required to maintain certification and training in accordance with the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council, including firearms qualification, under the supervision of Sergeant Brian Santa.

Although the SSO may be assigned to any of Ellington's five schools, the primary assignment will continue to be Ellington High School for the foreseeable future.

Parents with inquiries about this added security measure may contact Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools at snicol@ellingtonschools.net or review this frequently asked question section on our website.

[Armed School Security Officer FAQ](#)

Dr. Nicol and Sergeant Brian Santa will be available for in person questions on August 21, 2019 6:00 p.m. at the Board of Education offices.

Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools