

From the Office of the Principal

March 7, 2018

Dear DSA Families,

Dear DSA Parents and Guardians,

Over the last few weeks, I have received several emails from parents and guardians regarding the recent school shooting in Florida. Each essentially posed the same type of question: what does DSA do to prevent such things from happening here? There was a very clear emphasis on process and procedures for school safety. The focus of many questions was also on what we do to increase the likelihood that something like this doesn't happen at DSA. Below you will find an outline of recent measures DSA has implemented to enhance security at DSA. You will also find a review of emergency information that is posted on the DSA website. This would be a good time to review this information and become more familiar with these emergency procedures.

Based on the questions I have received I also want to provide an opportunity for parents to attend a listening session so we can hear your concerns on school safety at DSA. Below you will find a schedule for these sessions. You will see that we have tried to schedule these at various time to accommodate varying schedules. We encourage you to come and share your thoughts at one of these sessions with the administration and parent representatives of the Collaborative School Committee.

Wednesday- March 14<sup>th</sup>- 7:30 – 8:30 am in room 113

Wednesday- March 21<sup>st</sup>- 3:00 – 4:00 pm in room 115

Friday- March 23<sup>rd</sup>- 8:30 – 9:30 am- in the Commons

Monday- April 2<sup>nd</sup>- 5:30 – 6:30 pm- Room 113

This year DSA has continued to make some intentional changes to our overall security measures in an effort to continue providing a safe school environment for all our students and staff. DSA is adding three additional security cameras; one in the basement, one in the music department hallway on the first floor, and in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade hallway looking west. These additional cameras have been funded through your generous donations to the *Fill the Gap* campaign. In addition, DSA has also been able to add an additional campus security officer, bringing our security staff to a total of three. One of those officers is provided to the school by the district, one is paid for from the school budget, and one is paid for through *Fill the Gap* funding. Campus Security Officers are in the building daily, according to the following schedule:

Shift One- 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

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Shift Two- 11:00 am – 7:30 pm

Shift Three- 1:30 – 10:00 pm

It is also important for the community to understand that school safety and security protocols, and policy, are established by the DPS Board of Education and the DPS Department of Safety and Security. As a school within the Denver Public Schools, DSA is required to follow these established policies and procedures. If you are interested in knowing more about DPS safety measures you will find an announcement from Denver Public Schools regarding a community parent meeting on school safety that will be held at Teller Elementary School on March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. Make sure that you click the link to sign up through the Sign-Up Genius link.

## **Emergency Response Procedures**

2017-2018

In a serious emergency, school administrators must decide to lock down/out, shelter-in-place or evacuate. Practice drills are conducted on a regular basis as required by Denver Public Schools.

DSA will communicate via email, the phone as well as the News Updates on the homepage of the website about current emergency situations which effect the safety of the entire school.

## **Lock Down Procedures**

**Threat is inside or very close to the school.** School administration secures the building and safely shelters all students, staff and visitors INSIDE the school building. A school will go on lock down if a threat is in their building or their neighborhood and endangers the occupants of the school.

- **School business and classroom activities cease.**
- **NO** person is allowed to enter or leave the building.
- Facility Manager/Staff lock all exterior doors
- Teachers/Staff lock classroom/work area doors
- Staff and students are **DOWN, QUIET and OUT OF SIGHT**

**Lock Down Drills:** Parents will receive an email notification that a Lock Down Drill has taken place.

**Lock Down:** Parents will receive an email and/or phone communication from the school when feasibly possible at the end of a Lock Down.

## **Lock Out Procedures**

**Threat is definitely away from the school.** School administration secures the building and safely shelters all students, staff and visitors INSIDE the school building. A school will go on lock

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out if a threat is in their neighborhood and does not endanger the occupants of the school. For a modified lock down, follow these procedures:

- **NO** person is allowed to enter or leave the building
- Interior doors DO NOT need to be locked
- **School business and classroom activities continue as normal**
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### **Shelter-In-Place Procedures for Severe Weather**

Severe weather is any weather condition that may cause injury to students and staff or damage to structures. Different types of weather call for different type of actions. Schools will go into shelter-in-place if the threat of severe weather is in the area. Examples of severe weather are:

- High winds
- Thunder and lightning storms
- Hail
- Tornadoes

Site Administrator will monitor the National Weather Service announcements and will notify staff and students to move away from rooms on the perimeter and go to the designated Inside Safe Assembly Locations as necessary. Site Administrator will direct students and staff to take the protective kneeling position if indicated.

### **Evacuation**

If it is unsafe for students, staff, and visitors to remain inside the building they will evacuate to designated evacuation locations on campus or off-site. The most common evacuation is a fire drill.

- All students and staff will exit the school and go to designated locations.
- Everyone will remain outside until the “all clear” message is given.
- If students and staff need to leave school grounds, we will walk or go by bus to our designated off-site emergency evacuation locations
- Students will be released to parents or guardians who are listed on the emergency card and have proper I.D.

### **In the Event of a School Emergency**

We understand that parent’s first reaction is to come immediately to the school site to make sure their child is safe. In order to increase the chances of all students remaining safe during an emergency, we ask the following of our parents (in the event of an emergency):

- **DO** check the DPS webpage for updated information (<http://www.dpsk12.org>).
- **DO** tune into local TV/radio stations for school news alerts.
- **DO** listen for information regarding reunification with your child.
- **DO** contact DPS Communications at 720.423.3414 should you need to talk to someone

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- **Refrain** from going to your child's school. This will create traffic congestion hampering the efforts of first responders.
- **Refrain** from calling your child or your child's school. Excessive phone calls could jam the phone system and interfere with emergency communications.

In closing, the safety of our staff, students, and the community is of great concern to all. We continually monitor safety and make adjustments as needed to our internal procedures. It is important that we work together as a community to ensure the safety of all involved.

Sincerely,



William M. Kohut,  
Principal, Denver School of the Arts