

# Whitehall-Coplay School District

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**Administration Building**  
**2940 MacArthur Road**  
**Whitehall, PA 18052-3398**  
**(610) 439-1431**  
**Fax: (610) 435-0124**

**LORIE D. HACKETT, Ed. D**  
*SUPERINTENDENT*  
**CHRISTOPHER A. SCHIFFERT**  
*ASSISTANT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT*  
**J. MICHAEL MALAY Jr.**  
*BUSINESS MANAGER*  
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*DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION*  
**LAURA E. VANDEGRIFT**  
*HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER*

February 24, 2018

Dear Whitehall-Coplay Community,

In light of the most recent school shooting tragedy in Florida and due to the recent investigation of possible threats in our own district, I feel it is of the utmost importance to assure our community that the safety of our students and staff is our number one priority.

To provide a general knowledge base, I wish to share some of the many resources available and various safety measures that we currently have in place in the Whitehall-Coplay School District.

- Student Assistance Program (SAP) – A staff, student, and community system for referrals on students in possible distress, which utilizes trained and certified professionals to identify available supports and resources for students in crisis
- District Tip Line – An anonymous phone number for anyone wishing to report a concern, which is checked routinely by our district’s School Resource Officer
- Communities in Schools (CIS) – Provides various resources for students struggling in school based on a variety of mental health issues
- On-site Children and Youth worker
- Trained school counselors and school psychologists in each building
- Alternative educational placements
- School Resource Officer – Armed police officer on campus while school is in session
- Trained security staff at the high school and middle school
- Outstanding working relationship with the Whitehall Township Police Department and all Whitehall emergency personnel
- An Emergency Operations Plan for the entire district, which was recently evaluated and updated
- Building Emergency Operation Plans and Evacuation Plans in every classroom across the district
- State-of-the-Art Camera Surveillance System across the district

- District Evacuation Plans (updated yearly)
- Routine drills (fire, weather, lockdowns, etc.) held at each building with students and staff
- Tabletop drills conducted at each building with staff
- Monitored, controlled access to each building on campus
- Locked school buildings

As a school district, we meet routinely with our administrative team to discuss and update our emergency procedures. We meet regularly with Whitehall Township Police and other law enforcement and emergency response providers to seek input and refine our emergency response procedures. Each year our administrators and our School Resource Officer attend conferences and seminars on school safety and security to remain on the forefront of current best practices.

I encourage you, as parents, to continue to engage your children in ongoing conversations, reminding them to report anything that seems out of the ordinary or makes them feel uncomfortable to their building principal or to the police. Continue to monitor your children's social media communications and their circle of friends. Supporting our children with positive relationships and open conversations is crucial in helping them deal with uncertainty.

Further, district administration is aware of the possibility of local and national protests and walkouts as a result of recent events. Administration will be meeting with students to understand their concerns, to assist in the facilitation of any walkouts that may arise, and to assure that they are carried out in an orderly and, more importantly, safe fashion. It is important for students to feel they have a voice, and we will neither encourage nor discourage this but rather view it as a positive learning experience for our students.

In closing, while we can never predict when and where such a tragedy, such as what occurred in Parkland, Florida, could take place, we can be proactive and plan diligently to provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students and staff.

Kindest regards,  
Lorie D. Hackett, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools