

# SAFE SECURE SCHOOLS



## District 113A Staff Safety Drill on September 25<sup>th</sup>

Student safety is one of our District's priorities. District 113A has plans for all four phases of emergency and disaster management: 1) Preparedness; 2) Response; 3) Recovery; and 4) Mitigation. In addition to the general plan, each school has a Crisis Management Team that is prepared to implement planned procedures in the event of a crisis or disaster. One of the emergency response plan components that is most difficult to address is the component related to school violence. Thankfully, most educators and law enforcement officers have not experienced this type of emergency. History and direct experience with emergencies such as fire and tornado have resulted in concrete, detailed response plans for schools. The school violence that took place at Columbine, Virginia Tech, NIU and most recently, Sandy Hook, is a tragic reminder that schools must design plans to respond to such events, as well.

Our school district has worked in cooperation with the Lemont Police Department to develop a planned response to a violent situation in a school. We are fortunate to have a strong and collaborative relationship with our local safety agencies. The entire staff receives training for this plan each year, and new staff members are trained during the employee orientation program. For many years, we have conducted violent intruder drills with all of our staff on a rotating schedule among the schools. In Illinois, state law (Public Act 098-0048) recently modified the School Safety Drill Act to require that the Law Enforcement Drill required to be conducted every year at each school building that houses children must now be conducted specifically to address a school shooting incident. Therefore, this year, we will conduct school shooter drills **at all three schools**. These drills will take place on **Friday, September 25, 2015**, when there are no students present in our schools (teacher institute day). **On that date, Oakwood and River Valley will be closed all morning until 11:00 a.m. Old Quarry will be closed from 9:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.** If you pass the schools on September 25<sup>th</sup>, you may see emergency vehicles present on the site. Please know that we are working hard to test our plans and make necessary revisions so that we can offer the best protections for our students and staff.

As noted in our parent/student handbook, we also conduct law enforcement lockdown drills for students during the school year in accordance with state law (105 ILCS 128 Section 20). However, the student drills are conducted by school staff; police officials provide guidance and are present only for observation during drills. We count on the fact that staff members will direct the responses of the students entrusted to their care during a crisis with violence. The principals and teachers work with officers from the Lemont Police Department to lead safety discussions with the students. Those discussions are designed to match students' developmental levels and include some basic safety actions that students can take during a violent situation in a school.

We can better ensure safe and secure school sites for District 113A students and staff with you as our partners. Please ask your child about the safety discussions that take place at school so that you can reinforce the procedures that have been presented. If you have any questions about our district's safety plans, please feel free to contact your child's principal. Thank you for your cooperation and support.