



## Talking to Your Children About School Safety:

The following information and resources have been compiled by the Guidance Department at Menands School.

Acts of violence can contribute to children feeling anxiety, fear, and a sense of personal risk. Parents and school personnel can help children feel safe by encouraging them to express their concerns on safety and validating their feelings. Here are a couple developmentally appropriate ways to help your child reinforce a sense of security:

### Grades K-2:

- Provide brief, simple information.
- Reassure that school and home are safe and adults are there to protect them.
- Give simple examples of school safety such as exterior doors being locked and emergency drills.

### Grades 3-5:

- Discuss the efforts of the school and community leaders to provide safety.
- Review safety procedures for home and school and identify safe adults to go to.

### Grades 6-8:

- Emphasize the role students can have on school safety such as not letting strangers into the building and reporting threats made to the school.
- Discuss the importance of following school safety guidelines, communicating any personal safety concerns to school staff, and seeking out support for emotional needs.

The Counseling Office is an informative resource for the academic and social/emotional well-being of our students, their parents/guardians and school staff members. Together we can build a team that is better prepared to monitor and assist with the progress of each student.

Resources: [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org) & [www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net)



# School Safety A Priority at Menands School

## A Message from the Superintendent:

Dear Menands School Community,

The Menands Union Free School District has always held the safety of students among its most important responsibilities. Recent events at the national and local level, have raised questions among parents, and rightfully so about measures we have in place to ensure a safe learning environment.

I am pleased that in partnership with our PTA we are able to present the second in a series of Parents as Partners Forums - dedicated to school safety, along with participants from the Menands Police Department and the New York State Police.

I am confident the evening's presentation along with the material included in this brochure will address many of your questions, and can serve as a resource for you. If at any time you have questions or concerns about school safety, do not hesitate to contact us here at school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Maureen A. Long".

Dr. Maureen A. Long  
Superintendent of Schools



# Safety Measures in Place at Menands School

## A Resource for Parents

### Safety Procedures & Protocols:

New York State Education Law 2801-a, and Education Law Section 807 require school districts to develop and maintain a **District-Wide Safety Plan** and **Building-Level Safety Plans** to help school officials identify and respond to potential emergencies. The Menands Union Free School District-Wide Safety Plan was developed by the Menands School District Safety Team with guidance from the New York State Police.

Menands Union Free School **District-Safety Team** consists of representatives from the following groups: administrator, teacher, local law enforcement officials, ambulance or other emergency response agencies, and other representatives. The District Safety Team is responsible for the overall development, maintenance, and revision of the **Emergency Response Plan (ERP)** and for coordinating training and exercising the Emergency Response Plan.

Planning, **conducting drills** and participating in exercises with law enforcement, fire, emergency officials and other members of the school community ensures a comprehensive, unified approach to emergency response planning.

### Security Measures:

We have a variety of measures in place to keep students safe. There is a **single point of entrance** to the building during regular school hours; all other doors are locked. Visitors enter through a **controlled point of entry** which is staffed during regular school hours. **Visitors must sign in** and wear an **identification tag** throughout the duration of their stay in the building. Staff members all have **identification badges**.

### Relationships with Local Law Enforcement:

We are most fortunate to have a positive working relationship with our Menands Police Department, who are readily available to respond in the event of an emergency, and accessible through **direct electronic notification to 911**. Outside of specific needs they are regularly present and visit school, they **escort our bus runs** daily, and it is through their department we have access to a **school crossing guard**.

### Our Continued Diligence & Efforts:

Attention to safety is an ongoing endeavor, we keep abreast of current best practices and consistently assess and implement facility improvements. Most recently the following has been implemented:

- **Staff training** relative to violence in schools conducted by The **School and Community Outreach Coordinator from the NYS Police**.
- In the current year we began to participate in the **Health-Safety-Risk Management Services** offered through Capital Region BOCES.
- Recent infrastructure improvements include **phones** in every classroom, allowing for **improved internal communication**, **direct access by all to 911**, **remote capabilities** to security measures.

### Next Steps:

Our Safety Team will continue to meet and work with designated agencies to evaluate and improve upon measures in place. Consistent with this we will continue to seek out and provide up to date guidance and training, and **professional development** to staff. We will continue to educate students as to procedures in the event of an emergency and provide them opportunities to practice. As part of our voter approved capital project, **additional infrastructure improvements** will be undertaken, including a sprinkler system throughout the building.

### How Can You Partner with Us:

Partnering with parents is vital to optimizing safety at school. Please talk with your children and **reinforce school practices and procedures**. Remind them to voice concerns about school safety immediately; **if they see something, say something**. Take advantage of opportunities to improve home-school communication; be sure the school has **current contact information** including emergency contacts. If you are not already, sign up for the **Everbridge Communication System**; this will allow you to receive immediate notification in the event of a safety concern or emergency.