

RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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For immediate release

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School Security Update January 9, 2013

- 1. School security guards (unarmed) have been hired for the entrances at the schools. The security guards follow a check-in protocol that has been reviewed by the Ridgefield Police Department. The procedure includes using one entrance, requiring visitors to present photo identification, and recording visitor purpose, check-in and exit times. The work stations for the guards are in the process of being set up with computer, phone, and door buzzer.
- 2. The school security guards will be at the schools beginning one-hour before the start of the instructional day and ending one-hour after the school day ends. These hours will provide coverage for much of the before and after school activities at the elementary schools. There is one evening security guard at RHS.
- 3. The Ridgefield Police Department has reviewed its officer patrol system to ensure appropriate police presence and patrol of school grounds.
- 4. The district administration is preparing a request for additional Ridgefield Police Department School Resource Officers to present to the Board of Education.
- 5. School security assessment walk-throughs are being conducted within the next eight weeks for each school site with security consultants, police officers, and school staff.
- 6. The district administration is researching access control systems (card swipe system) for staff members and will recommend one to the Board of Education as soon as possible.
- 7. The district administration is researching visitor management systems (electronic background database scans of school visitors) and will recommend one to the Board of Education.
- 8. The district administration is preparing updated requests for increased surveillance cameras, especially at the elementary and middle schools, and will bring the requests to the Board of Education as soon as possible.

9. The BOE approved the formation of a School Security Committee which is researching and coordinating the efforts described above. The committee's purpose and goals:

Purpose: The purpose of the School Security Committee is to coordinate a safe school environment using best current security practices. The committee assumes that the Ridgefield Public Schools should work in concert with the Ridgefield Police Department, the Ridgefield Fire Department, First Selectman's Office, security experts and advisors, and other appropriate town departments.

Goals:

Research best security practices regarding school physical plant, communication, staffing, procedures, and training.

Establish short, medium, and long-term security goals for physical plant, communication, staffing, procedures, and training.

Conduct security audits by consultants and staff to monitor each school site's security Ensure appropriate training for all staff

Establish a school security committee in each building

Develop security implementation plan with recommended budget

Advise the Superintendent, the Board of Education and the Board of Selectmen The committee will prepare recommendations to the Board of Education in as timely a manner as possible.

- 10. The district administration is preparing a budget for the security enhancements (based on the above) to recommend to the Board of Education. After Board of Education review and approval, the Board will work with the Town and the State to determine possible local, state, and federal funding sources.
- 11. Several Ridgefield staff members attended the Connecticut School Security Symposium on January 7, 2013, sponsored by Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), and Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE).

Deborah Low Superintendent Ridgefield Public Schools January 9, 2013