

Eastford Elementary School
Safety and School Climate Committee
Minutes
Thursday, May 2, 2019
6:00 PM

I. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM

Attendance: Members present – Deborah Richards, Lori Crocker-Lincoln, Beth Harrington, Jason Szemrelyo, Carole McCombe. Absent – Megan Calchera

- II. Minutes from last meeting on October 25, 2018 were reviewed** – It was noted that Sergeant Gosselin from CT State Police was transferred to a different Troop in January. No consistent member has been assigned to replace him as our designated liaison at this point. Anyone at Troop D will assist us with our needs if we give them a call.

III. Review and discuss recent evacuation awareness drill

On April 22, 2019 the whole school participated in an evacuation awareness drill/exercise to familiarize all students and staff with our reunification location, Eastford Congregational Church. Deb Richards completed an “After Action Report” noting strengths and areas for improvement as noted below.

Strengths:

1. Increase school children and staff awareness of evacuation procedure and knowledge of how and when an evacuation may take place.
2. Increased awareness of parents and guardians.
3. Testing of range of service of cell and hand held radios with for communication.

Areas for Improvement:

1. Use of ‘user friendly’ wording to describe what the evacuation is for and why it was being done.
2. Ensure all staff identify themselves before offering roll call.
3. Decide which side of road staff and children will traverse.
4. Suggestion: make Church Road one-way to increase safety for motor vehicles and pedestrians.

Going forward a plan should be set for regular awareness drills of this nature. The next practice should include entering the church to utilize the classroom space and lock the doors.

IV. Discuss 2019-2020 Safety Plan submission

Deb Richards will assist in reviewing the Hazard Analysis section. Every two years we need to redo the Security and Vulnerability Assessment. Nurse Roto and Beth Harrington will assist in updating the Health Annex and

Mental Health Annex. There are some new sections added to the Safety Plan template that will need to be addressed for the 2019 submission in November.

V. Severe weather protocols/drills

In addition to providing annual training for staff on emergency procedures for lockdown, fire drills and evacuations, we will also include regular review of protocols for severe weather events. Classroom teachers will discuss various weather-related events such as tornado, hurricane and earthquake in an age appropriate way with students. Students will practice moving into the hallway to 'duck and cover' if a tornado is imminent and moving to the lower level away from windows if a hurricane is likely in our area.

VI. Other items relating to School Safety

There was discussion about security at the main entrance. Deb Richards noted that a parent held the door for her to enter as she approached the building on one visit.

Are we doing enough by having office staff buzz in people we know or should we be asking for ID from everyone?

Do we need to make changes to the entranceway and lobby area? Double doors on each side of the main lobby or having visitors enter directly into the office during school hours? Would a bank-teller style window be more secure at the main desk for collecting identification and monitoring visitors? Security Grant money often becomes available to enhance school security measures. Deb Richards will keep us informed.

VII. School Climate Surveys

Beth Harrington shared results from the Parent Feedback Survey given in April. All families were encouraged to fill one out. Overall feedback was very positive. Areas for improvement include respectful student-to-student interactions and respectful student to staff interactions. Staff will analyze the survey data and use this feedback to develop a parent feedback goal for next school year.

VIII. Incidences of Bullying

Beth Harrington shared data relating to bullying. There have been two formal bullying complaints submitted this school year. One was substantiated and measures have been put in place to provide a safe learning environment for the students involved. The other was not substantiated.

IX. Suicide Prevention Awareness and Protocols

Beth Harrington is developing a guide for staff on suicide awareness and prevention along with protocols for reporting concerns and working with students at risk. This will become part of the Mental Health Annex of the Safety Plan and shared with staff during annual training and professional development.

X. Other items relating to School Climate

A Committee is working to update the School Climate Plan. This will be submitted to the State in June.

XI. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.