

Eastford Elementary School
School Safety and Security Committee Minutes
Tuesday, April 18, 2023
5:00 PM (hybrid)

- I. **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM.

Members present: Stephen Bowen, Donna Leake, Deb Richards (First Selectman), Michael Bilica, Doug Beaudoin (EIFC), Carole McCombe, Charles Kernan, Lori Crocker-Lincoln, Terry Cote.

II. **Overview of safety measures currently in place**

Carole and Charlie provided an overview of general safety measures and practices that are in place that many may not realize we have or do.

1. Panic buttons are installed in multiple locations. Panic buttons are connected to dispatch to send an immediate call for response and will release the fire doors that will “lock down” access to most of the building.
2. Staff are trained yearly on elements of the safety plan that pertain to fire drills, lock down drills, student mental health risks, mandated reporting, hazardous materials, cybersecurity, verbal threats, and threats over social media, as well as responses to various natural disasters.
3. Exterior doors are always closed and locked. We have single point access at the main entry. Visitors must be buzzed in by a staff member.
4. Exterior surveillance cameras are monitored in real time and can be played back for added details.
5. Staff have keyless entry access at 4 locations around the building.
6. Window glass in classroom doors is wire-meshed for resistance.

III. **Implications of recent tragedies on EES**

- a. **Committee discussion** – means of entry and outcomes of recent tragedies were discussed. Unfortunately, the nature of such tragedies makes it difficult to have a standard set of protocols to follow (like with fire drills, for example).
- b. **DEMHS updates** – Deb Richards shared that DEMHS continues to provide notification to districts regarding training opportunities, professional development for school staff and other updates to support schools and school safety and security. As EMD, Deb attends regular meetings and shares information with school staff.

c. Training – a variety of training options were discussed such as active shooter training and regular walk-throughs with security and emergency responders.

IV. Security Grant – Dr. Leake provided an update on the current round of the School Security Grant that we are applying for. We can submit for reimbursement for items relating to school security improvements that we have already paid for since 2014 and we are able to request reimbursement for additional items as needed. The reimbursement rate is 60.36%. The grant is due by April 28.

V. Citizens Participation – Christopher Bowen shared his concerns about school safety as a parent and citizen of the community. He offered the support of an acquaintance who is trained in conducting school security audits. He also suggested some solutions for consideration, including having armed personnel in the school and visible barriers (such as bollards) to prevent vehicles driving into the building or grassy areas.

Based on discussion and feedback, the committee drafted an action plan to:

- A. Create a short parent feedback survey to gather insight into their feelings regarding school safety and security.
- B. Acquire quotes for bollards and installation.
- C. Conduct walk-through and updated security audit with members of law enforcement and emergency responders.

VI. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.