

Keeping Students Safe at School

It seems we can't watch the news on TV or scroll through our news feeds without seeing an article or coverage of demonstrations across the country regarding school safety. These events fuel our discussions here at NMSD regarding how we can keep our students and staff safe at school. Passionate debate regarding the issues of mental health, gun control, bullying, family and societal dynamics, and more surface in our discussions.

For the past two months, the school board has shared meaningful dialogue with our staff and community regarding discipline and behavior issues at school. To those who have attended a meeting or have contacted us individually, we thank you for taking the time to add your input. As a board, we want you, our community, to know that we are listening, and constantly evaluating our work on your behalf.

We also want to let you know that we are not alone in dealing with these important topics. As we network around the state, we hear about the same issues in other districts.

In response to addressing school safety, the district is implementing a program called PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support). PBIS uses evidence-based interventions to determine the most effective and most positive approach to addressing even the most severe problem behaviors.

While this system is new to North Mason, it is important to emphasize that all change takes time. In our instant gratification society, it is easy to pull individual cases and conclude that behaviors are getting worse. The data provided to the board shows improvement in key indicators, but we

also know that data alone doesn't tell the whole story. Our promise to you is to remain vigilant and ensure proper implementation and course correction when and where needed.

During the summer, the board will form a committee to re-examine our Key Work and create a strategic plan. Our Key Work was last examined in 2012, and while still generally relevant today, we must strive to stay ahead of emerging trends, needs, and the community environment. We are excited to take on this challenge to reflect on where we have been, where we are now, and where we want to be in the future.

As always, we thank you for the privilege of serving you by educating our most precious resource: Our children, Our future.

Craig Patti

Director District 5

cpatti@northmasonschoools.org