



Warren Township Schools

Shining Brighter Every Day

Police Patrols in Warren Township Schools

As part of an ongoing partnership between Warren Township Schools and the Warren Township Police Department, periodic police patrols will be conducted in each of the district's four elementary schools and the middle school during the school year.

Police patrols are "a good way for our officers to familiarize themselves with the interior layout of the schools as well as with the faculty," says Warren Township Police Chief William Keane. "Additionally, regular patrols by uniformed officers will allow the children to get used to seeing the police there, making them more approachable and hopefully feeling more comfortable with us should an emergency situation take place."

These planned police rotations are "not due to any particular security concerns," adds Superintendent Dr. Matthew Mingle. "This is a proactive approach to further the relationship between the police and the school community. Students and staff will get to know the police officers and vice versa."

Keane says he has instructed patrol sergeants and supervisors to "conduct periodic, random checks during the school week with no specific time or school." According to the police chief, an officer will enter a school, notify the main office staff of his/her presence and perform a "walk through."

In addition, in close cooperation with the school district, Warren Township police will carry out one so-called active shooter drill during the school year. The drill will be conducted at one of the district's five schools and will occur on a weekend when staff and students are not present. Advance notice of the location/date/time of the active shooter drill will be communicated to the community via district e-blast, Facebook, Twitter and the district website.

"Active shooter drills are just one part of the state-mandated 'School Security Drill Law' and of school safety and security plans. Other drills include evacuation, bomb threat, lockdown, shelter in place, and several others," says Ronald Berry, Security Compliance Manager for the school district. "All drills are important to assure a proper response in the event of an actual emergency."

Chief Keane says his officers train annually for active shooter scenarios and have utilized Watchung Hills Regional High School in past years as the practical setting. Over time, the goal will be to provide access to each of the district schools for these drills.

Police presence in the district schools and at WHRHS is not new. Keane notes that an officer is regularly assigned to the high school on a daily basis and that his officers have routinely performed school safety lectures, along with the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program, at the elementary and middle schools.

Superintendent Mingle applauds the partnership with the Warren Township Police Department and all those who work to keep staff and students safe.

"We are fortunate to have such a close working relationship between the school district and police department. There is a clear shared focus on the safety of each student who comes to our schools on a daily basis," Mingle says. "I applaud the Warren Township Board of Education and our leadership team for all of their efforts in this area."

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