



Graham Local Schools Safety Update #5: Graham makes plans for more Safety Upgrades.

April 10, 2018

Graham Local Schools takes safety seriously. Our staff works hard to plan, assess, and review actions to improve our awareness and responses to issues that arise over time. Events of the last two months have led to more in-depth review by our Emergency Operations Team, and several recommendations will be implemented for the 2018-2019 school year. The district is taking several steps to address school safety:

1. School officials have been in contact with local authorities and the GLS Emergency Operations Team has convened to prepare for future ALICE training for students and staff in the fall of 2018. The A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) active shooter response training for all staff and students will continue on a consistent basis. Practicing our prepared planned responses is a proactive way to ensure new students and staff are trained, and all staff have updated communication about safety responses. Graham has been training staff and students in ALICE procedures for the past five years and is committed to making the safety of our students and staff a priority. This is not a new practice for the district, but renewed emphasis has been placed on a future training.
2. Graham is already using Social Sentinel and will continue to use it. The district recently installed the Social Sentinel Geo-Tag Identification System. Graham is currently the only district in Ohio using the Social Sentinel media alert tool, a geo-tagging social media alert system that helps us ascertain threats and save time.
3. Graham staff will soon receive the CrisisGo App for their devices. This App allows staff to report a crisis district-wide to administrators and authorities, making response time more efficient. This product will allow for one way and two way communications with staff instantly on all district computers and mobile devices. It allows staff to quickly report safety issues to administration. The software also allows for direct instant messaging to staff in a crisis situation. CrisisGo is offered to Graham Local Schools at no cost for the next three years by AASA.
4. Graham will be installing new, upgraded interior and exterior cameras and digital recording systems in all three academic buildings this spring.
5. Graham will improve its exterior lighting systems in several locations this summer.
6. Graham's bus drivers will be using a new App called StarTran to communicate, track students, and proactively handle discipline issues. This will improve response time, improve driver to administrator communications, and allow for more efficient resolution of issues on the road.

7. In August Graham Local Schools bus drivers will receive Advanced Bus Driver Certification training. The key topic of this training will be identifying, managing, and responding to crisis situations while operating a school bus. Graham bus drivers will receive training prior to the 2018-2019 school year on advanced de-escalation techniques and strategies for crisis situations. Every driver will have an opportunity to earn a nationally recognized certification from CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute). This certification will be offered internally by Graham staff, saving the district significant money in the process.
8. The district continues to research upgrades to exterior windows and doors. Bullet proof protective film will be installed to main entry points prior to the start of the 2018 school year.
9. Graham partners in multiple ways to address the mental health needs of our students. Next year we will encourage student representatives to join CHAMPS at the high school level with local counseling group DFYC. We will also continue to develop a Youth in Government Team for GHS. We are studying the impact of a part-time mental health social worker with county partners. A new probation officer is now working with Graham from the county.
10. The district has made a conscious effort to increase student access to licensed mental health counselors over the past two years. We are currently researching a distance learning grant for mental health screenings and telemedicine to create a social services "Hub" at GMS for the entire community.
11. Graham and its county partner schools and agencies have met to dialogue about safety and reporting measures, court action steps, and future meetings to share information.

The Ohio Dept. of Homeland Security has approved Graham's comprehensive safety plan. Best practices in all areas of building safety and security have been described and recommendations have been made. The Board of education discusses ways to increase the resources we have available to devote to improving infrastructure related to safety annually.

While it is impossible to predict or prevent every situation that we may confront, we can act to be as prepared as possible to handle crisis situations as they arise. I want to assure you that we are prioritizing school safety and student wellness. Director of Operations Don Burley will be reviewing Safety at our July Board meeting, as he does annually.

Sincerely,

Kirk Koennecke

Superintendent

Graham Local Schools

