



# **ELIZABETH TO ENACT NEW MEASURES FOR EVEN SAFER SCHOOLS**

*School Year Begins with New Security Protocols*

**For Immediate Release**

**September 3, 2018**

Elizabeth Public Schools officials announced today they are implementing enhanced security measures in their continuing effort to assure the safety and security of their students and staff. “To achieve excellence for each of our students, we must provide a safe learning environment,” said Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer.

The district employs Director of Security Matthew Glackin, Lead Investigator Tomas Escribano and a team of former law enforcement professionals who lead the efforts through collaboration and communication with our educational staff.

Measures that are currently in place include:

- Updated security cameras at all schools to monitor buildings and grounds. The Elizabeth Police Department currently has real time camera viewing access of all the elementary and high schools to use in emergency situations.
- The District maintains a variety of active security measures at all times, including locked exterior doors, mandatory check-in procedures at school entrances, video surveillance, alarms and security personnel. In recent years, the District has invested in enhancing security at school building entrances.
- A comprehensive emergency operations plan guides our response to emergency situations at the District and school level. Staff are trained to implement emergency procedures and participate in practice drills throughout the year. Students receive training as well, including

participation in fire and lockdown drills throughout the year.

- All classrooms have a quick-reference, crisis response guide that covers various situations.

- Implementation of the T-Pass Visitor Management System in all schools which has significantly minimized visitors throughout the buildings and disruptions to the educational programs.

- Continued emphasis on collaboration and community policing with officers present at times in all school buildings.

- The District and local law enforcement have a very strong partnership. Law enforcement personnel regularly participate in the review of our security and emergency procedures. Our emergency operations plan is reviewed annually and, this year, the District has worked closely with Union County Emergency Management and the Elizabeth Police Department to review our current emergency operations plan.

Board of Education President Maria Carvalho added “Our safety team works with emergency management agencies on the national, state and local levels every day to protect our district. The Board works on a daily basis to provide the tools necessary to do this critical work.”

Additional efforts recently implemented include the requirement that parents and visitors have an appointment prior to visitation at a district school. This is in addition to their screening by T-Pass, the Teacher Parent Authentication Security System already in place.

Also this year, Elizabeth Public Schools will not be in session on Election Day November 6.

Carvalho stated parents should assist in the district's preparedness by assuring the district can contact them. In the event of a crisis situation parents can assist by following these simple rules :

DO NOT call or rush to your child's school. Your presence could interfere with emergency responders.

DO NOT phone your child or school staff.

Do follow the instructions given by the emergency notification text/email system.

DO tune into local TV/Radio stations for official school news alerts.

DO rely only on official communication from school or public safety officials.

DO listen for official information regarding reunification with your child.